VOLUME L, No. 25 DECEMBER 3, 1953

THE JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY

REMARKS ON DEWEY'S CONCEPTION OF ENDS AND MEANS[1]

IN both the earlier and the more recent discussions of Dewey's conception of value, one point, it seems to me, has usually been overlooked: the importance of the temporal relation between the present and the future. This was a point which, because of its ethical importance, Dewey emphasized rather early in his philosophical career—when, for instance, he quoted Emerson's essay, "Compensation," to criticize the trivial principle of renouncing *present* goods for the sake of *future* ones.[2] Later on, he repeated more than once that we live in the present and not in the future, that we can master the former but not the latter, or at least, that the future can be controlled *only* by means of the present.

Now the relation between means and ends is clearly bound up with a temporal view. Ends are in the future, means in the present. We do control means, we do not control ends. Hence the foolishness of conceiving ends apart from means. On the contrary, ends must be judged, and evaluated, in the light of the means available for their attainment. And this is so not only because, as has often been explained both by various commentators and by Dewey himself, the means to be used might well require an excessive amount of effort, or might well in some different way involve the sacrifice of other ends or other values.[3] The incompleteness of such an explanation becomes evident if we reflect on the fact that, were this all, Dewey's position would then be only a form of pluralistic ethical utilitarianism, which would not really overcome the commonly accepted distinction between ends and means—that ends are the only carriers of values, while means have a merely instrumental function. Not even the insistence upon the fact that means themselves have value-qualities would change the traditional position fundamentally. For, it could be objected, they have value-qualities as things or situations capable of being

[1] This paper is the text, in a slightly enlarged form, of a lecture delivered at the Forum of the Department of Philosophy of Princeton University on February 10, 1953.

[2] *Interest in Relation to Training of the Will* (Chicago, 1895), p. 7.

[3] See, for instance, *Theory of Valuation*, p. 25, and Sidney Hook, *John Dewey: An Intellectual Portrait*, p. 144.

directly enjoyed or suffered, in addition to their function as means. That many or most things can be at the same time both means and ends is a common-sense remark which does not refute the common-sense distinction between means as mere instrumentalities and ends as values-in-themselves, even though not to be taken in isolation.

But the fact is that Dewey does not recognize the validity of this common-sense distinction. This becomes especially evident when he propounds such definitions as "ends are directive means," or "ends are procedural means."[4] The present paper will try (i) to outline what I think is a more adequate interpretation of Dewey's conception of means and ends; (ii) to clarify it further through illustrations drawn from the social and educational fields; and (iii) to discuss very briefly certain theoretical implications and to trace certain further developments of these concepts.

I

"Ends-in-view," which Dewey distinguishes from "ends" as accomplished results, are to be conceived as *plans*. A plan is never ultimate and final, never an "end-in-itself." Its "directive" or "procedural" function is plainly evident. A plan is rather a means than an end. Take the plan an architect employs while building a house. Its instrumental function as a device useful in regulating the actual procedures of the construction requires no explanation. However, this does not make it impossible to continue to distinguish between ends and means. We should say, perhaps, that such a plan serves as a means for *building*, while "building" is itself a means for *having* the house. The striking naïveté of this type of reasoning is in itself no good reason for rejecting it. On the contrary, it could be rephrased in a much more pretentious form: ends are both final and instrumental, are both something to be *had* and something to be *employed*—provided, of course, that they are intelligent ends, i.e., ends already conceived in terms of the means needed for their realization. This warning against building castles in the air is completely in the spirit of Dewey, as well as in the spirit of Utilitarianism. But it is not, in my opinion, the core of Dewey's ethics, nor does it give us a satisfactory account of the relation between ends and means.

However, when we view this relation temporally, everything seems to undergo a radical change of perspective. An "end" must be something that is capable of being enjoyed, not tomorrow, or next year, or during the next life, but "right now"; otherwise,

[4] *Theory of Valuation*, p. 53, and *Logic, the Theory of Inquiry*, p. 496.

it could not *move* us to act "right now." How can a *future* end be enjoyed *right now?* At first glance, it seems clear enough that there are at least two different factors that must be taken carefully into account. One is the element of *foreseeing,* in the sense of an *emotional anticipation;* the other is the *capacity to organize* a course of integrated activities to be enjoyed *as* integrated activities. Having an end in mind, I can *foretaste* something of its future presence. But in the meantime, as an end rather than as a dream, it is working at present as the chief *organizing factor* of my own activities. Although no one denies the importance of this second element in the practical life, and although this factor is recognized in common experience as most important in the most important matters (in vocational choice, in social group life, etc.), we are accustomed to emphasize the other element, that of foretaste, in our ethical discussions, or rather to take it tacitly for granted, as the inexhaustible reservoir of our "motivations."

But every careful reader of Dewey knows well that in Dewey's writings this element of "foretasting" is considered to be almost irrelevant, that anticipation is stressed in its intellectual rather than in its emotional meaning. The greatest emphasis is put on the idea that an aim or end should be evaluated according to its capacity to represent a "freeing of activities,"[5] or a means of moving, guiding, and integrating our present, living activities.

Let us concentrate in our further analysis exclusively on this second element. In the end, we shall find that even the value of the first factor cannot be understood except in terms of the second. Dewey's disregard for the element of foretasting becomes evident if we consider one example he uses, a very appropriate one indeed, because he is speaking of shooting and the target is a rabbit. A rabbit! what a palatable thing! But palatableness is completely out of the picture, in spite of the various ways Dewey interprets the behavior of the hunter:

> . . . what he wants is to shoot straight: a certain kind of activity. Or, if it is the rabbit he wants, it is not rabbit apart from his activity, but as a factor in activity; he wants to eat the rabbit, or to show it as an evidence of his marksmanship—he wants to do something with it. The doing with the thing, not the thing in isolation, is his end. The object is but a phase of the active end,—continuing the activity successfully.[6]

Here the element of *continuity* seems to replace completely the element of *foretasting,* as we can see better by analyzing another type of Deweyan illustration. Building a house is a long process,

[5] *Democracy and Education,* p. 123.

[6] *Ibid.,* p. 123.

in which, if anywhere, means and ends appear to be quite distinct and lacking in any obvious kind of continuity. This should be true at least from the technological point of view, and it is worth while to notice that Dewey tries to show the contrary from just this technological angle. In building a house there are means to be used and to be eliminated later, like the scaffoldings. They can be considered as "necessary evils." But there are also certain means which are intended to become integral parts of the completed building, of the "end," like the elevators, which nevertheless were utilized before as "means."[7] It goes without saying that Dewey's preferences are all for the second type of means. I don't know what value such an attitude may have in engineering problems, but it is rather interesting for a better understanding of Dewey's ethics.

The same illustration of house-building, which in the *Theory of Valuation* furnishes a technological *analogy* for the moral problems of integrating means and ends, is developed in *Human Nature and Conduct* as a *direct example* of the moral process. Significantly enough, the title of the chapter in which this example appears is "Present and Future." Dewey introduces it by saying:

> . . . if a legitimate case of subordination of present to regulation of the future may anywhere be found, it is in such a case as this. For a man usually builds a house for the sake of the comfort and security, the "control," thereby afforded to future living rather than just for the fun—or the trouble—of building. If in such a case inspection shows that, after all, intellectual concern with the past and future is for the sake of directing present activity and giving it meaning, the conclusion may be accepted for other cases.[8]

We cannot wait to be certain about the future before engaging in particular actions; that would be just the way not to act at all. A man who wants to build a house for himself considers the future uses to which the house will probably be put, not because those possibilities are certain to be realized beyond any reasonable doubt—the contrary is true—but because the more attention he pays to such future uses "the better he will do his present job which is the activity of building." If more control of future living is possible it is "wholly dependent upon taking his present activity, seriously and devotedly, as an end, not a means."[9] In brief, attention is given to the future as an *organizational factor*, but "devotion" belongs to the present. There is not a single word about the pleasure of foretasting, except, negatively, for some critical ob-

[7] *Theory of Valuation*, pp. 49–50.
[8] *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 268.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 269.

servations about "scamping" present action in behalf of future "ends." And also, the function that is commonly taken to be performed by the element of foretasting seems to be here assigned to the motive of *continuity*:

> We must not confuse the act of building with the house when built. The latter *is* a means, not a fulfilment. But it is such only because it enters into a new activity which is present not future. Life is continuous. The act of building in time gives way to the acts connected with a domicile. But everywhere the good, the fulfilment, the meaning of activity, resides in a present made possible by judging existing conditions in their connections.[10]

Here and in many other passages we have the impression that Dewey is purposely avoiding the problem of what is commonly taken to be the moving power of "ends"—or even of that new element of "continuity." Naturally, he is not eliminating the emotional element, he purposely pays no attention to it—or rather, is inclined to deny its relation to the future:

> Memory of the past, observation of the present, foresight of the future are indispensable. But they are indispensable *to* a present liberation, an enriching growth of action. Happiness is fundamental in morals only because happiness is not something to be sought for, but is something now attained, even in the midst of pain and trouble, whenever recognition of our ties with nature and with fellow-men releases and informs our action.[11]

As we see, happiness, or joy, or whatever may in Dewey's opinion be the positive emotional correlate of acting with an end, has nothing to do with any *foretasting* of that end. And the function of such a foretasting is completely replaced by the feeling of continuity. In the passage just quoted, after having spoken of "happiness," Dewey turns to "reasonableness," which "is a necessity because it is the perception of the continuities that take action out of its immediateness and isolation into connection with the past and future."

Now if we want to understand better what rôle this element of "continuity" plays in Dewey's conception, it may be useful to try to complete by ourselves the analysis of the behavior of the man building a house, to see what "motivations" are concerned.

A man decides to build a house if and only if he has found that such an activity enriches his present. This enrichment is realized through a particular project for building a house, in so far as it is capable both (1) of guiding, organizing, and integrating most of his present possible activities and available means (of "freeing activities"), and (2) of affording him a feeling of the

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 269.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 265.

continuity of his own activities, to be expanded better in the new house—for instance, of the activities shared with his family. A man who sought complications in his project only in order to engage in some more difficult work, would be easily judged foolish, and not without reason. The wise man, finding he has a further supply of energy at his disposal, will work out a better playroom for the children, better storage space for his wife, or a better heating system for them all, enjoying *right now* both the way these new details help to organize his present activities, and the feeling of a better continuity insured to his activities in general by the prospect of such an expansion of active possibilities as the new changes offer.

Pushing further this analysis of Dewey's example in Dewey's own spirit, we can add that, of these two factors, the first is to be considered the more important and the primary one (while the second could very probably be understood as an acquired habit born as a natural reaction to earlier experiences of interrupted, broken activities). Let us consider another of Dewey's illustrations:

> A skilled artisan who enjoys his work is aware that what he is making is made for future use. Externally his action is one technically labeled "production." It seems to illustrate the subjection of present activity to remote ends. But actually, morally, psychologically, the sense of the utility of the article produced is a factor in the present significance of action due to the present utilization of abilities, giving play to taste and skill, accomplishing something now.[12]

Whatever this "sense of utility" may be, it is evidently nothing more than one factor among other factors contributing to the enjoyment of the artisan's present work. As to the nature of such a "sense of utility," we shall gain further light as we go on. But, disregarding this element for the moment, let me now summarize briefly the results so far attained.

Ends are only and literally "procedural means": they organize the procedures of our present experience, and by so doing enrich it and make it significant. In this lies *all* their value. Present experience should be called the only real and all-embracing "end"; but such a use of the term "end" would be unnatural and arbitrary. The temporal reference is essential to any correct use of the word. "End" indicates a foreseen accomplishment, an event, both physical and human, hypothetically placed in the future and used now as an agency for reorganizing our present activities. These present activities are indeed *means* for such an *end*, but they exist, and the end does not; and therefore it will be in the

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 271.

light of such a set of activities and of the greater or smaller "happiness," "joy," or "pleasure" accompanying them that the value of an end will be judged. But in order for such a pleasure to be real, it must not be poisoned by the prospect of a more or less proximate interruption of these activities as a whole, even if minor changes are admitted and perhaps liked (this point will be explained later). The "feeling of continuity" is essential for the appreciation of our present itself. To speak of "competitive ends" that must be taken into account in every evaluation is nothing but a possibly misleading way of referring to this factor of "continuity." On the other hand, if ethical pluralism is thus deprived of any "ultimate" status in Dewey, and limited to an intermediate function, the emphasis he puts on continuity forbids not only an atomistic conception of "pleasures," but also any alleged ultimate and final character of present experience taken in some mystic sense. Experience is an historical, continuous "whole," and its "wholeness" is a first-rate pervasive quality constituting its *value*.

II

What, then, is the real, operational criterion for distinguishing between ends and means? Perhaps it might be stated in the following way: an "end" is the relational quality of a set of activities, which confers order upon them and insures their continuity; such a quality is ordinarily synthesized by focusing some particular foreseeable outcome of the same set of activities in some moment of the future. Any aspect of experience which precedes that moment and is related as a part to the whole must be considered a "means."

Such a definition, while it breaks very decidedly with any kind of preconceptions about the value-relation between means and ends, does maintain, in a new interpretation, all the common-sense temporal and functional distinctions implied by the very use of the terms.

Note that usually, but not necessarily, an end will become changed or transformed, at a certain moment, from procedural to material means, i.e., from an ideal organizing factor into a particular element to be employed within the organization of further activities. This is true for the house when it has been built. This is never true for the ends of games. The objection that the ends of games are false or pseudo-ends is not valid. In reality they fulfill completely the main function of ends, i.e., they integrate present activities. They fail only to give us a feeling of continuity in the same measure as do the ends of work, as distinct

from *routines*. I am not disparaging games; on the contrary, I think that games—I mean particularly children's games—are a much better sample of *human* activities (in a eulogistic sense) than is most work, unfortunately. The activity of work *should* develop from the activity of play as an enrichment of it. Such a natural development is not impossible; it is only, in its full sense, very rare, because of a large array of social obstacles. So far as I know, Dewey's conception of ends is the only general conception of human purposeful activity which supplies us with a clear working criterion for distinguishing between play and work, especially if we bring in the criterion of continuity, which is a matter of degrees, by means of the distinction between procedural and material means. This distinction, which we have already found in Dewey, though not in a particularly developed form for the purpose of our present context, has to be taken in a common-sense rather than in a strictly legal way. In any event, these terms are not essential to the concept, which may be better explained by illustrations. In a game the end, or aim, or goal you are pursuing is not supposed to become at a certain moment a more or less stable acquisition for further activities (the procedural means are not supposed to become material means). When the sand castle is finished, usually the game is finished, not only the game of building it up, but any activity related to it. Perhaps the child engages in the new game of throwing it down. But in this case the game consists in building-up-and-throwing-down a sand castle, and no *foreseen* product of the whole activity will help further the same activity or another one. Acquired skills are not *foreseen*, or *anticipated*, consequences of the game *as* a game. The end-goal of a game proves to be, when attained, the end-term of the activities in a temporal sense. But the end of work, when attained, proves to be a means for further activities. This criterion affords also a good account of the instances which are intermediate between play and work, such as the case of children building a sand trail for playing with little stone or glass balls, or the case of children working at the construction of a little chariot.

Aside from the question of the passage from play to "labor," so painfully distorted by social and scholastic prejudices, the most important social implication of the principle just stated concerns the problem of the division of labor. A sound way of reformulating this problem might be the following: If ends accrue naturally to activities as both *organization* and *continuity* factors, there exists a great probability that these two functions point in different directions; the division of labor and the exchange of products restore a satisfactory balance between them.

Dewey never states such a principle, but it very probably underlies every argument of Dewey's against the mechanical and unfair way in which the division of labor now occurs.[13] Take the case of an artisan who likes his activity, say carpentry. His activity is not play, he has "the sense of the utility of the article produced"; but since the expression is too vague, we might replace it, according to our general statements, with another: he has "the feeling of continuity" gratified by the prospect of the results of his work. What is this prospect? Not so much the possibility of directly using his articles as material means for further activities of his own, but rather of exchanging them in order to obtain a varied set of different material means capable of supporting his further activities. The division of labor and economic exchange ought to be the chief factor permitting everyone to enjoy the most congenial activities and obtain the most congenial products, if not directly, by means of an exchange.

At this point I ought myself to warn against the possibility of getting oversimplifications by using the very concepts I have tried to clarify. For instance, a complete identification of "sense of utility," "feeling of continuity," and "exchange value" is likely to involve an undue philistinism in the interpretation of actual moral behavior. In reality we appreciate continuity also aside from any personal reference, so that we can grant that actually, in the artisan we are speaking about, the "feeling of continuity," psychologically primary, has developed into a direct enjoyment of the possibilities of using the pieces of furniture he is producing, regardless of the person who will use them. Such a type of development does not exclude, indeed it usually goes along with, the appreciation of the exchange value of his products in terms of commodities necessary for his personal and family life.

Let me add that, on a higher level, the first aspect constitutes the only natural explanation for a type of behavior less exceptional than is commonly thought: self-sacrifice, and especially the self-sacrifice involving the very loss of one's own life. We sometimes love the continuity of our activities better than our own "private" continuity.

Dewey's conception of ends and means, in my interpretation, seems to have an extraordinarily large field of application. I must here limit myself to a single further remark, with reference to the social matters concerned. Ends conceived as they are commonly conceived do not show any special social character, any particular disposition to be "shared" or "participated in" by

[13] See, for instance, *Human Nature and Conduct*, pp. 271–277.

others. But ends conceived chiefly as factors for reorganizing the whole course of activities turn out to be essentially social. For activities, as we have seen, must be capable both of engaging us as widely as possible and of proving continuous rather than interrupted. But continuity involves mechanization, unless activities possess a third and *progressive* character, i.e., the capacity to assimilate novelties from time to time. This progressive character is not a new and independent one, since only progressive activities can in the long run prove both widely engaging and continuous. However, the fact that it is practically involved in the other two traits does not eliminate the historical and educational truth that it represents a conquest of tremendous importance in the development of one's active habits. The tendency to choose activities capable of gradual inner renewal is perhaps the chief *spiritual* force acting both in children at play and in learned men of the highest cultural awareness.

But the individual seeking for novelties able to enrich his own experience very soon discovers that social contacts are their chief available source. Beyond our own limited endowment of original impulses there are the innumerable endowments of other persons, a perennial and inexhaustible reservoir of "novelty." But it is quite evident that this is true only in a democratic society, in a well-balanced net of relations of give-and-take, whereas any relation of slave and master is mechanical in nature and internally corrupts both persons.

As a matter of fact, ends actively conceived are social in their tendency, for the natural reason that shared activities are more truly "activities" than "private" ones.

III

Of course the illustrations we have used have not been developed as far as their social importance demands, but I think they are useful *as* illustrations, and serve to clarify the general concepts we are dealing with. But they also raise a problem. Why does the elaboration here outlined, though fully consistent both with Dewey's particular assertions and with his general spirit, not exist in some such form in Dewey's writings? Why has the very ends-and-means conception, as here set forth, had to be rather reconstructed *from* than directly found *in* Dewey's works?

In attempting an answer, let me refer to a paper by one of the most sympathetic of Dewey's critics, Sidney Hook. As a matter of fact, in explaining Dewey's ethics, he emphasizes its "formal"

rather than its "material" aspects: I mean that he purposely seems to avoid empirical considerations about the nature of man and to limit himself to very general traits that no further scientific inquiry would change. The only human characteristic he takes into account explicitly, in order to reject emotional theories of ethics, is intelligence: "That man has intelligence is as much a fact about his nature as that he has needs and desires which he seeks to satisfy. . . . He has a natural interest in intelligence because the prospering of all other interests depends upon it."[14] But it seems to me that intelligence is in this way given a merely *instrumental* value grounded in needs and desires as sources of *direct* values (and regardless of their particular nature). This is hardly in the spirit of Dewey. Nevertheless the statement quoted may be regarded as correct if we combine it with the conception that active needs, communication needs, are the most important, and that intelligence means integration and continuity, and therefore is appreciated *also* for itself.

This means that in order to understand the distinctive characters of Dewey's ethics it is no longer possible to separate what we have called its "formal aspects" from its "material aspects." But there is nothing arbitrary in the fact that Hook maintains rather the opposite attitude, for Dewey himself almost always exhibited the same tendency.

He had a particular, *psychological* conception of the human being as a being in whom the chief motivations, when they are natural, are rather bound to the enjoyment of activities *as* activities than to the fulfillment of any particular set of instincts. His distrust of instincts and reflexes is well known, but he developed neither a clear distinction between nor an identification of instincts and impulses, although the latter are probably to be understood as the basic structures of the general tendency to undifferentiated activity.[15]

But he employed such views in ethical matters no farther than we have seen in the passages examined; and even less, when he entered upon particular discussion about morals.

Whether Dewey's unwillingness to emphasize the "material" assumptions underlying his ethics was due to a persistence of idealistic habits or to some different reason would be an interest-

[14] Sidney Hook, "Dewey's Ethical Theory," in *John Dewey, Philosopher of Science and Freedom* (New York, 1950), p. 215.

[15] For a general account of Dewey's psychology, see Gordon W. Allport, "Dewey's Individual and Social Psychology," in the coöperative volume *The Philosophy of John Dewey*, ed. by P. A. Schilpp (Chicago, 1939).

ing topic for further investigation. In any event, a brief examination of his most recent contributions in this field may be enlightening as to certain aspects of this attitude.

The last writing I know is of 1949,[16] and here again Dewey limits himself to a "methodological" approach to the subject, i.e., a highly formal one, although penetrating and interesting. It would seem that Dewey, while stating that the problem of value cannot be handled except by means of the coöperative contributions of a large set of scientific disciplines, thinks that just to get accustomed to such a conception *in general* should be preliminary to any more *particular* development. Hence his insistence on showing that the "field of value" is a *behavioral* one, i.e., completely open to scientific investigation. The risk of such an approach is the risk involved in any attempt to get preliminary definitions of the topics to be dealt with before starting to treat them actually.[17]

Dewey's demand that people should accept a naturalistic attitude toward values before knowing what kind of results are involved is perhaps scientifically correct, but psychologically rather naïve, especially if we recall that, at least during the whole history of Western thought, people have refused materialistic and naturalistic viewpoints rather because of their results than for methodological reasons. And even now they seem extremely unwilling to sign any blank checks.

To restate my remarks in a simpler way: Dewey maintains that *values* accrue to the mere acts of prizing in so far as they undergo reflection. But, given the usual conception of man's nature, in such a statement people are afraid they recognize the rather unpleasant traits of an old-fashioned utilitarianism, and the mere fact that Dewey stresses intelligence furnishes no criterion for distinguishing the two.

Now a utilitarian interpretation of Dewey's ethics seems to be untenable; but, so far as his more technical writings on the subject go, we do not find in them any explicit support for rejecting that interpretation, except perhaps some few sentences.

[16] "The Field of Value," in *Value, a Cooperative Inquiry*, ed. by Ray Lepley (New York, 1949), pp. 64–77.

[17] This remark, explaining the emptiness of most recent discussions about value, is made by Hook at the beginning of the article quoted above, and is perfectly sound, although the same charge might be directed against Hook himself in so far as his rather "formal" treatment of the topic is closer to a definition than to an empirical account.

When, for instance, in the article just quoted, Dewey states that "things used as means (whether material or procedural means) are in fact prized, cherished, made subject matters of loving care and devotion in every art and pursuit that has attained any desirable development" and criticizes the distinction between "instrumental" and "final" value, it seems clear enough that Dewey is not speaking of a mechanical *transfer* to the means of the emotional charge previously attached to the ends only. We know that he is speaking of an enjoyment of activities as such. We know that for him, since means are activities or things involved in activities, means as such are just the most important or the only stuff of prizing, cherishing, and so on; this is so, of course, only for intelligent courses of action ("arts"), not for *routines*.

Among the few who have seriously tried to direct discussion toward the "material" rather than the "formal" aspects of Dewey's ethics, are Philip Blair Rice and C. E. Ayres.[18] However, the ways they follow are radically different. Mr. Rice understands perfectly the necessity of making the discussion more concrete by reference to the results of psychological experiments. But, alas, he interprets these results in a rather mentalistic way, moving toward a psychology of "feeling" which we cannot criticize here, but which gives, it seems to me, a good justification for Dewey's "methodological" emphasis upon a "behavioral" approach.

Mr. Ayres' conception of a "technological continuity" may be a valuable development of Dewey's concept of continuity taken in its most concrete and social sense. Dewey himself recognizes the category of "technology" as fundamental.[19] But the fact that after all he does not develop it further, and that his acknowledgment of Ayres' contributions remains verbal, might be evidence of some hidden defect in Ayres' position which Dewey felt rather than recognized. Very probably Ayres' lacks are complementary to Rice's lacks: he fails to give a direct emotional account of technological human engagement, so that his contrasting it with the commitment to religious beliefs, superstitions, etc., turns out to be a little superficial, and even an indulgence in the black-and-white fallacy.

I do not say that the right solution is to be found along any intermediate way. I only know that the solution may be found only along the line of a stricter coöperation between philosophy, psychology, sociology, anthropology, and also and especially educa-

[18] See especially their contributions to the coöperative volume on *Value* cited above.

[19] See *Problems of Men*, p. 291 n.

tional theory. Let me stress this last point. Dewey's concreteness and richness in conceiving human nature is very closely bound up with his deep, experimental knowledge of the way men are formed. No modern insight into the educational process is possible without an active conception of human beings. But in Dewey the primacy of activity over stimulus, already vaguely stated in his famous article on *The Reflex Arc Concept,* is in my opinion the chief assumption underlying his whole philosophy, and an assumption he borrowed chiefly from his educational experience.

I think we should look in this direction rather than in any other when we are seeking Dewey's "metaphysics"; this might be even better than following too strictly the suggestions contained in *Experience and Nature.* In any event, even there the "generic traits" of reality are chiefly uncertainty and novelty, they are *temporal* traits, involving consideration of present and future, of the continuity which *should be* achieved between them, as a *progressive,* not a *routine* continuity. Dewey's metaphysics, if we want to use the term, is a metaphysics of time, like Bergson's and Croce's and Heidegger's, whose suggestive concept of "being for Death" is, in its deepest meaning, just a moral reminder for a serious life engaged in the present, without illusory escape into the future.[20] No deep insight into Dewey's thought is possible without grasping his conception of time, the reality of which is also the reality of the individual:

> Genuine time, if it exists as anything else except the measure of motion in space, is all one with the existence of individuals as individuals, with the creative, with the occurrence of unpredictable novelties. Everything that can be said contrary to this conclusion is but a reminder that an individual may lose his individuality, for individuals become imprisoned in routine and fall to the level of mechanism. Genuine time then ceases to be an integral element in their being. Our behavior becomes predictable because it is but an external rearrangement of what went before.[21]

Here are also to be found the main points of both likeness and difference between Dewey and the views of the ancients on development. It might be said that both Aristotle's and Dewey's metaphysics are centered on the concept of "continuity," the difference lying in the fact that Aristotle recognises continuity only in partial, merely mental activities, which in so far furnish the pattern of perfection of "actuality" as contrasted with the imperfection of

[20] For an analysis of this point, see J. G. Gray, "The Idea of Death in Existentialism," this JOURNAL, Vol. XLVIII (1951), pp. 113–127.

[21] "Time and Individuality," in *Time and Its Mysteries,* Series II (New York University Press, 1940), p. 107.

"movement,"[22] while for Dewey real continuity is found only in complete, body-and-mind *progessive* activities. For Aristotle men build in order to have built and to rest; for Dewey men build houses, or whatever, in order to continue building, in the unlimited enrichment of a shared social life.

However, in conclusion, I should like to make clear that, by emphasizing in Dewey's philosophy just those elements which can be connected with the main themes of ancient and recent metaphysics, I do not intend to advocate any new metaphysical manipulation of them. On the contrary, as I have said, only a scientific approach to concepts like continuity, progress, and so on, can avoid the danger of mythical speculations about their "essence." A scientific approach cannot always be a laboratory approach, but in every case it implies observation, experimentation, a better establishment of the terminology involved, and some amount of coöperative work, which in our instance should be, as I have said, among students in different scientific fields. The necessity of such an approach may be made clear by considering some of the objections likely to be raised against the conceptions developed in this paper.[23]

Very often children do not seek for continuity in their games, but, on the contrary, they seek change and variety. A possible answer would be that this is true only if their games are not actually engaging the largest set of their active structures. Unilateral activities give way very soon to a search for other, *compensatory* activities, whereas well-integrated activities aim rather at self-maintenance. But such a discussion should not be a dialectical one. Careful psychological inquiry is needed.

Why should the element of "continuity" displace completely the element of "foretasting" in our conception of "motivations"? "Motivations" as such may surely be bound to mere instinctive

[22] See Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, IX, 6, 1048 (W. D. Ross's translation): "For it is not true that at the same time we are walking and have walked, or are building and have built, or are coming to be and have come to be, or are being moved and have been moved, but if we are being moved and have been moved, what is moving us is different from what has moved us. But it is the same thing that at the same time has seen and is seeing, or is thinking and has thought. The latter sort of process, then, I call an actuality, and the former a movement."

[23] The three objections which follow were actually raised, respectively, by Dr. Herbert G. Bohnert, Professor Ledger Wood, and Professor Carl G. Hempel, during the discussion after the reading of my paper at Princeton. My grateful acknowledgment of the permission to make reference to the opinions they expressed does not impute any responsibility to them for the condensed formulation I am employing here.

stimuli, but this is not so for motivations in which conscious ends play an important rôle. As far as a mental image stimulates us directly, though in the absence of the real physical stimulus, it could hardly be said that we have an "end" in mind. We behave rather like sleep-walkers than in a purposeful way, and only a relatively poor set of deeply ingrained instincts and habits is involved in our acts. It seems more convenient and nearer to common usage to reserve the term "end" for the case of activities in which some kind of evaluation is involved, and in which therefore our whole past experience affects our actual behavior. In this case we shall find that the element of foretasting seems to vanish more and more, rather than to become more complex because of the greater variety of needs and desires taken into account; what actually does gain ground is the element of active continuity.

But this is not a matter, as may also be objected, of merely arbitrary new definitions, which would make the consideration of ends in terms of continuity nothing but an analytical statement. Apart from some necessary respect for the common-sense use of the term, the convenience of new definitions is grounded only on the results of careful investigation, capable of disclosing to us how far-reaching mere conditioned stimulation can prove, and probably of showing that, so far as we engage in a process of evaluation, i.e., of constructing ends, the attractiveness of activity, and of continuity in activity, becomes more and more the main moving force. "Reasonableness" or intelligence, as "the perception of the continuities that take action out of its immediateness and isolation into connection with past and future," acquires more and more an autonomous power of motivation. Intelligence can no longer be conceived as a complicated switchboard between stimuli and responses. Nevertheless its autonomy, won only through the mediation of activities and *as an activity,* belongs to the realm of natural phenomena and is capable of being genetically and functionally inquired into. Such an empirical recognition is the best guarantee against the danger of falling again into the old dualism of conceiving intelligence as a value *in se,* detached from and perhaps contrasted with all the other human natural needs. For such a dualism was always justified, at least in part, by the failure of alleged naturalistic theories to understand the value of intelligence. In certain cases philosophy, as the very defender of values, can *naturally* become *anti-naturalistic.*

Philosophy, however, can follow a different path, as did in the past some of the greatest systems of thought, by stimulating the development of particular sciences, from mathematics to biology and physics, by furnishing them with new general hypotheses and

a new methodological awareness. Dewey's philosophy seems capable of playing more and more a similar rôle today for psychology and social psychology.[24] Therefore a careful study of his concept of man is likely to have a much greater importance than simple historical interpretations usually have.

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INDETERMINATE SITUATION AND PROBLEM IN DEWEY'S LOGICAL THEORY

SINCE the publication of Dewey's *Logic* in 1938, a number of critical questions have been raised concerning the concept of indeterminate situation which have not been adequately answered; I shall discuss what answers Dewey's theory of inquiry can provide for those questions. I also wish to suggest some improvements in the Deweyan conceptions of the indeterminate situation as occasioning inquiry and of the second phase of inquiry, formulation of a problem. The first part of the paper is concerned with indeterminate situations and the second with problem-formulation.

I

The first section of this part summarizes Dewey's own account of indeterminate situations as occasioning inquiries, the second and third sections summarize and discuss critical questions not completely answered, and the last section offers a further clarification-improvement of the Deweyan account of indeterminate situations.

1

On Dewey's view an inquiry is occasioned by a situation which is indeterminate. A situation of an organism is the full context of environmental objects and events (*Logic,* pp. 66–67) [1]—past, present, and future (p. 228)—*as experienced* by that organism (pp. 67, 106); and it is experienced as permeated by a unique quality as, e.g., a Rembrandt quality pervades a certain painting

[24] Without attempting any bird's-eye survey of a tremendously large field, I think it is worth while to note that the group of psychologists developing new types of experiments in the field of visual perception (A. Ames, Jr., H. Cantril, F. P. Kilpatrick, W. H. Ittelson, etc.) have recently adopted the Deweyan concept of "transaction" as fundamental in their own field.

[1] From now on all references will be to the *Logic* unless otherwise indicated.

(pp. 68, 70). An *indeterminate* situation has a unique, pervasive felt quality of disturbance, trouble, ambiguity, confusion, conflict, doubtfulness—in one general term, indeterminateness (pp. 105–106). An indeterminate situation occurs when ongoing automatically habitual activity does not satisfy a need (p. 106)—which may be a need for knowledge for its own sake (pp. 60–61). What is indeterminate about the situation is the significance of environmental objects and events (p. 107), what they evidence (pp. 51, 52). More specifically, they are experienced as not evidencing what the results will be, relevant to the organism's need, of possible organism-environment interactions (p. 107). The unique quality of indeterminateness in any given case controls inquiry until the inquiry (if successful) has transformed the situation into a determinate one (pp. 68–70, 105). Any indeterminate situation is not doubtful "only in a 'subjective' sense" ("subjective" meaning "isolated" from environment (p. 33)), but rather inquiry is occasioned because the situation is "inherently doubtful." Thus "Personal states of doubt that are not evoked by and are not relative to some existential situation are pathological; when they are extreme they constitute the mania of doubting" (pp. 105–106).

2

H. S. Thayer in *The Logic of Pragmatism* has argued as follows: "troubled, disturbed, ambiguous, confused, full of conflicting tendencies, obscure, its constituents do not hang together" are all phrases used in the *Logic* to describe the indeterminateness of a situation. But these expressions as commonly used refer to states of organisms. However, Dewey explicitly denied that to be his meaning. Then it is not clear how the expressions are to be understood. Thayer suggests that it would be less unclear and would be correct, not leading to subjectivism, and not inconsistent with the rest of Dewey's theory of inquiry to say that the organism is doubtful, troubled, confused, etc. ("behavioral" terms) with respect to his relation to objects and events in his environment which "do not hang together" (or any other "physical term") rather than saying that the entire situation is doubtful, troubled, etc. However, these expressions themselves, Thayer believes, still are in need of "fixed meanings," especially needing clarification in the case of mathematical inquiries.[2]

It is not clear that in common usage we never use at least some such terms as "doubtful," "confused," etc., to refer to inorganic

[2] H. S. Thayer, *The Logic of Pragmatism* (New York, The Humanities Press, 1952), pp. 78–84, 203, 201.

events. We sometimes say, e.g., "The outcome of the investigation is doubtful," "The military situation is confused," "It's an ambiguous state of affairs."[3] However, even neglecting this, Dewey's usage does not seem as unclear as Thayer states. For what is meant in the *Logic* by "doubtful," "confused," etc., as applied to situations is that the situation's objects and events are experienced as lacking some significance, as insufficiently evidencing something relevant to the organism's need (a way of speaking which does not violate ordinary usage). For instance, if you are supposed to be met by automobile by someone you don't know at a busy corner, a car pulling up at that corner is initially experienced as ambiguous, as indeterminate, in that the pulling up does not clearly signify that this automobile is the one to meet you.

Dewey's meaning of "indeterminate" as "indeterminate in significance" seems clearer than Thayer's proposed translation in terms of "behavioral" and "physical" terms. For instance, on that interpretation of "indeterminate," mathematical inquiries are describable as occasioned by indeterminate situations. For at the beginning of a mathematical investigation the materials already existing in the way of an established body of mathematical knowledge lack determinate significance concerning whether a given formula can be proved to be a theorem within some system, or what further interesting theorems can be developed in some system, or whether a given system is consistent, or whatever the mathematical question is.

D. S. Mackay raised a number of critical questions about the concept of indeterminate situations as occasions of inquiry in a discussion with Dewey.[4] I shall summarily state each of Mackay's questions which seem not to have been dealt with completely and follow it with a brief statement of the answer which seems to be involved in the Deweyan theory.

(1) How can the situation occasioning inquiry be indeterminate, since it occurs according to natural laws (*loc cit.*, p. 147)? —Since the indeterminateness of a situation occasioning inquiry is simply its objects and events signifying indeterminately in some respect, the situation can be indeterminate and still occur according to physical, biological, etc., laws.

[3] Recently Avery Brundage said of the question of whether Melbourne could accept the 1956 Olympics, "Maybe the city can build its own housing facilities, but I don't know what it can say now when the situation, even with expected state or federal help, is so confused and uncertain" (*New York Herald Tribune*, March 20, 1953, p. 27).

[4] This JOURNAL, Vol. XXXIX (1942), pp. 142, 290, 545.

(2) How can the initial situation control subsequent inquiry if it is indeterminate (*loc. cit.*, pp. 147–148)?—The indeterminateness of the situation is not just a fuzziness, a blur, an utter indefiniteness; it is rather a specifiable, formulable indeterminateness, which is actually formulated (subject to possible later reformulation) as active inquiry gets under way.[5] For instance, in the simple case of being met by an automobile driven by a stranger the indeterminateness is: this is the car—this isn't the car. Similarly for other instances.

(3) An indeterminate situation can control inquiry only if it "involves universal and objective standards with reference to which the problematic [indeterminate] nature of the situation is to be defined," and there is no place for these in Dewey's theory of inquiry (*loc. cit.*, p. 148).—The indeterminateness of a situation is described by Dewey as an experienced absence of evidencing concerning some matter. Such a description refers implicitly to logical standards describing what constitutes adequate evidencing. Thus a person who experiences objects and events as indeterminately signifying in some respect does so in part because of his habits of inferring soundly, his knowledge of how to infer correctly. For example, to revert just once more to the illustration of waiting for an automobile, a young child waiting might dart out immediately as a car pulled up precisely because he lacks some habits of inferring correctly; for him no indeterminateness is experienced. Whether Dewey's theory of inquiry describes the logical standards as "universal and objective" depends on just what meaning is attached to those expressions. I shall not consider that question further in this discussion.

(4) "Indeterminate" is ambiguous between meaning there is insufficient evidence for prediction and meaning "there are intelligible alternatives with a genuine option between them so that a decision *now* may contribute to the character of the eventual issue in the future." And Dewey's theory confuses these two meanings without "bridging the gap" between them (*loc. cit.*, pp. 145–146).—On Dewey's view an indeterminate situation involves inadequate evidencing for a prediction. But also, more specifically, the inadequate signifying concerns outcomes of possible organism-environment interactions; in this latter sense there can be "intelligible alternatives with a genuine option between them so that a decision *now* may contribute to the character of the

[5] Strictly speaking, *this* answer involves an extension of Dewey's account because in effect it includes the idea that one phase in inquiry is the formulation of a *question* which expresses the indeterminateness occasioning inquiry. This matter is discussed later: II, 3.

eventual issue in the future." Thus it is not clear how Dewey's theory does not "bridge the gap" between the two meanings of "indeterminate" which Mackay distinguishes.

(5) Dewey has used "existential" in at least four different senses: as "'really existing' *versus* non-existent and suppositious" (pp. 106, 107), as "barely existential *versus* having significance" (pp. 107, 222, 299), as "actual *versus* potential" (pp. 107, 251), and as "pertaining to observed facts *versus* pertaining to ideational contents expressed in ideas" (p. 112). Which of these senses, if any, are meant to be true of situations (*loc. cit.*, p. 549)?—"Existential" is first used in the *Logic* (p. 106) as a qualifier of "situation" during a caution against thinking of doubt as "subjective," as occurring "isolated" from environment. Thus "existential" in "existential situation" apparently has at least this meaning of emphasizing the participation of environmental events and objects. On the basis of Dewey's general concept of *situation* it can also be said that "existential" as applied to situations means situations both "really existing" and actual rather than potential.[6]

In a review of the *Logic* in *Mind* John Laird raised several questions concerning indeterminate situations[7] which admit of answers on the basis of Dewey's theory.

(1) If a pencil is stood on end, one doesn't know when or which way it will fall. But the present state of the pencil is not indeterminate. And if its future behavior is indeterminate that means either its future falling is not "fixed" before it occurs, or it cannot be known to be "fixed" before it occurs. "Where is the confusion in either case? Need the pencil be confused? Need the observer be confused?" (*loc. cit.*, p. 531).—The state of a pencil standing on end is indeterminate in the sense of that term relevant here, i.e., indeterminately signifying which way it will fall. The confusion is this indeterminateness experienced of the pencil under the circumstances. Of course we cannot say that

[6] This question of the meaning of "existential" came up in the Mackay-Dewey discussion specifically concerning whether the determinate situation which ends successful inquiry is "existential" or "merely intellectual." Dewey maintained the former, while Mackay said the situation terminating inquiry is, *while prospective*, ideational only. The question is not relevant to the subject of the present discussion but I should suggest in passing that both answers are correct. The final situation is, when it comes, existential. But this is not denied by saying that, before it is brought about, there is an idea of it only; any more than to say that before a (quite existential) boat, e.g., is made there is only an idea of it, is to deny that when made it is an existential boat.

[7] *Mind*, Vol. 48 (1939), pp. 530–532.

the pencil is confused in the same sense of "confused" in which we say that the observer is confused; and we would not say at all, in any common usage, that the pencil is confused. However, Dewey's theory does not assert that all objects experienced as indeterminate can be called "confused" without violating good usage. The relevant fact here is that the pencil and its context are experienced as indeterminate in significance.

(2) Some situations are confused and this affects subsequent action; e.g., Lord North was confused and this confusion affected world history. But this does not mean an inquirer studying the situation need be confused. Thus confused situations do not occasion inquiry (*loc. cit.*, pp. 531–532).—"Confused situation" in this case is simply ambiguous between meaning "including a person, other than the inquirer whose situation it is, who is or was or will be confused (e.g., Lord North)," and meaning "being indeterminate in significance." A confused situation in the former sense of "confused" is the sort Laird cites an instance of; but it is confused situations in the latter sense of "confused" that occasion inquiries.

3

Such statements of Dewey as "*We* are doubtful because the situation is inherently doubtful" (p. 106) [8] have caused critical questions to be raised. Dewey has answered some of these, but in a way which requires some further discussion. This provides the subject of this section.

Concerning such statements Russell asked whether Dewey meant that "a doubtful situation could exist without a personal doubter," so that, for instance, "there were doubtful situations in astronomical and geological epochs before there was life" (*Inquiry into Meaning and Truth*, p. 323).

Dewey answered that he *did* mean that a "doubtful situation . . . can exist without a personal doubter," but went on to explain that "the energies of an organism involved in the particular interactivity that constitutes, or *is*, the problematic situation are those involved in an ordinary course of living. They are *not* those of doubting. Doubt can . . . be legitimately imputed to the organism only in a *secondary* or derived manner." And concerning indeterminate situations existing before there were living things he wrote, "All that is necessary upon my theory is that an astronomical or geological epoch be an actual constituent of some

[8] Cf., e.g., *Experience and Nature*, p. 69, and "Experience, Knowledge, Value," Dewey's reply in *The Philosophy of John Dewey*, ed. by P. A. Schilpp, Chicago, Northwestern University Press, 1941, p. 571.

experienced problematic situation"; and that since experience is organism-environment interacting, and not a "private conceit," "indeterminacy in human experience . . . is evidence of some corresponding indeterminateness in the process of nature within which man exists (acts) and out of which he arose."[9]

Mackay asked whether Dewey meant by such statements as "We are doubtful because the situation is inherently doubtful" that "there are situations that are doubtful *per se* whether or not anyone happens to have been perplexed by them" (*op. cit.*, p. 142).

Dewey answered that he should not have used the word "doubtful" to describe the indeterminate situation before the situation is taken to require inquiry, because "Doubting is obviously correlative with inquiring" (*op. cit.*, p. 294). However, he insisted, the indeterminate situation is "pre-inquiry." This terminological remark changes Mackay's question to: does Dewey mean there are situations that are indeterminate *per se* whether or not anyone happens to have been perplexed by them? And Dewey's "pre-inquiry" remark, when considered in connection with the statement on use of "doubtful" and the explanation to Russell, at least means that an indeterminate situation may occur without perplexing someone, in the sense that the person does not commence an inquiry.

Laird asserted that there cannot be ambiguity, confusion, obscurity, in a "mindless situation"; for instance, ambiguity occurs when a mind or minds interpret differently with some cause, and "obscurity occurs because of our ignorance not because of its [the situation's] ignorance" (*op. cit.*, pp. 530–531).

Laird's critical remarks were not directly answered, but a Deweyan answer can easily be specified. Laird's remarks about "*mindless* situations" suggest an interpretation of experience as consisting only of private mental states, in the sense, for instance, of Karl Pearson's telephone-exchange simile, and the whole egocentric predicament it evidently involves. But this is precisely a view Dewey is concerned to avoid.[10]

However even after these Deweyan answers there is still some uncertainty about the full import of expressions about "situations inherently doubtful," or even "situations inherently indeterminate." The uncertainty can be expressed as two questions. First, can one organism experience objects and events as indeterminate which another experiences as determinate? And second, if no organisms exist, can an indeterminate situation occur?

[9] "Propositions, Warranted Assertibility, and Truth," this JOURNAL, Vol. XXXVIII (1941), pp. 183–184.

[10] Cf., e.g., pp. 33, 106; *Experience and Nature*, pp. 11–12.

Dealing with the first of these, consider an example, for instance Dewey's illustration in *How We Think* of the student wondering what the purpose is of the pole at a ferryboat's prow. At the beginning of this wondering his situation is indeterminate in its signifying concerning the pole's function. But suppose a friend is with him who knows what the pole is for. The latter experiences much the same objects and events, including the pole itself; but for him the situation is determinate in its signifying concerning the pole's function. And he may know, too, enough about his friend to know what the latter will do as a result of his wondering, and what answer he'll get; and thus the signifying of what the organism-environment interaction and its results will be is determinate for him while indeterminate for his friend who is wondering.[11] There does not seem to be anything special about this case. Thus, generalizing from the example, objects and events may be experienced by one organism as indeterminately signifying concerning some matter at the same time they are experienced by another organism as determinately signifying concerning that matter. Or, to put the same thing in another way, the same objects and events may be indeterminate in one situation and determinate in another at the same time.

This result appears to be in accord with Dewey's general concept of a situation as an *experienced* world; in fact it is a development of that concept. However, such statements as the last one quoted from Dewey's reply to Russell and "the situation is inherently doubtful" might seem to deny it. If they do not, then there is no more need for uncertainty (neglecting the second question temporarily). However, if they are to be understood as denying it, then the considerations in the last paragraph indicate that they are incorrect when so interpreted, and the Deweyan theory of inquiry would evidently be improved by no longer understanding them as including that meaning.

The question whether, if no organisms exist, an indeterminate situation can occur, is essentially the question that Russell asked. But it is repeated here because Dewey's answer to it when it was first asked involves a possible ambiguity. Before dealing with the ambiguity, however, another matter should be clarified. Dewey's answer may seem a bit strange because it speaks of geological and astronomical epochs as being constituents of *experienced situations*. But it should be recalled that a situation for Dewey is a past-

[11] I am not considering in this article the very important question of whether every inquiry is occasioned by an indeterminate signifying which concerns what results will be of organism-environment interactions. That question is for another discussion.

present-future affair (p. 228). And, accordingly, he means by "experiencing" (at least in some contexts) not just sensing, e.g., seeing a traffic light change or hearing a Geiger counter, but any assured (as opposed to only conjectural) awareness.[12]

Russell's question wasn't really answered by Dewey. For that question was, in effect, not whether indeterminate situations *now* occur, but whether indeterminate situations occurred before there were living things. This wording of the question shows that a distinction must be made between two senses of "when" a situation occurs. In one sense a situation occurs *when* the organism which experiences it is living through that experiencing-transaction with the objects and events. But in another sense a situation occurs *when* the past, present, and future objects and events experienced exist and occur. The intent of Russell's question doubtless included the former sense of "when," i.e., were there problematic situations being lived through by organisms in geological and astronomical epochs before there was life? The very wording of the question, as now clarified, indicates that the answer to it must be in the negative.

Once more, the considerations here appear to be in accord with, even to be developments of, Dewey's conception of a situation as events-and-objects-*as-experienced*. If none of the Deweyan statements such as "the situation is inherently doubtful" deny such considerations there seems no need for uncertainty concerning them. However if they are to be understood as including such a denial, then Deweyan logical theory would be improved by dropping that meaning of them.

4

Dewey speaks of states of doubt "not evoked by and . . . not relative to some existential situation" as "pathological." But what would be such a state of doubt? Dewey apparently gave no further explanation, nor even any illustrations; the matter is rather unclear. Considering "evoked by" first, it would seem that any doubt, be it about some matter of use-enjoyment or be it concerning knowledge for its own sake, however the doubt was occasioned, would be a blocking of habit and accompanying indeterminateness which would be felt, and would thereby constitute an indeterminate situation. It is not quite clear, thus, why such a doubt, whatever its more specific character, could not be said to be as much "evoked by" an "existential situation" as, e.g., doubt about how to get out of a forest, or how to start a car which

[12] Cf. *Knowing and the Known*, p. 96, n. 11; *Experience and Nature*, pp. 338-339.

won't go, or what causes cancer, all of which are presumably not "pathological" doubts.

Perhaps the matter can be clarified by considering some examples which might be commonly regarded, at least by some, as "pathological" doubting. One sort of doubting would be simply a vague uneasiness without reference to anything as possibly signifying. This would be "pathological" and not "evoked by" an existential situation; or rather it could be regarded as evoked equally by any and every existential situation and in that sense evoked by no situation (differentially).

But perhaps Dewey intends to condemn as "pathological" some other sorts of doubt. One type perhaps intended is skeptical doubts which seem in principle unverifiable; e.g., since there are dreams and illusions, how do we know all experience, all life, isn't a dream, a total illusion? Such a doubt would seem to involve, for the one who seriously entertains it, a blocking of certain previously smoothly functioning habits of thought; more specifically, when he tries to think metaphysically, tries to develop an adequate theory of the "generic traits of existence," he immediately has blocked the "natural" habit of thinking of whatever is experienced, save for *specific* illusions, as "existence." So long as he attempts to think metaphysically (unless he overcomes the doubt) his experience, his specific knowledge, his observations are of indeterminate significance with respect to the existential character of those of them not already proven to be illusory. Even granting that his doubt rests on a self-contradiction, the point here is that he does have a habit blocked by something (recognition of occurrence of specific dreams and illusions) and does have an accompanying feeling of doubt, an experiencing of environmental objects and events as of indeterminate significance with reference to some knowledge needed. It is thus not clear that such doubt is not "evoked by an existential situation."

But perhaps "existential" has some special force here not involved in the meaning of "indeterminate situation" (and other than the senses Mackay distinguishes). But what criterion might that word mean which would not be satisfied by the case under consideration? The doubt in question, like most skeptical doubts, is evoked by specific, presumably "existential" (i.e., observed), objects and events, i.e., dreams and illusions known to be such—in that sense it seems evoked by an existential situation. However perhaps what they indeterminately signify, i.e., is the world "really" as experienced or is it *not* as experienced?, is not "existential." In the sense that the skeptic might be correctly said to want knowledge of a "reality" conceived in a self-contradictory

fashion, i.e., as a "reality" inaccessible to any possible experiencing, he might be said to be wondering about signifying with respect to something not "existential," because self-contradictory. Perhaps that not unimportant idea is part of what Dewey intended by "existential" in this context. But if so it should be noted that some evidence would be needed that the skeptic's concept of reality *is* self-contradictory and similarly for any alleged self-contradictoriness of the skeptical meanings of "knowledge of other minds," "knowledge of the future," etc. Or if Dewey did not intend to put a verifiability criterion of meaning in this form, but simply meant by "existential" in this context that what is indeterminately signified must be capable of being determinately signified by some "possible experience," evidence would be needed for that criterion.

Continuing to consider only "evoked by" and leaving "relative to" an existential situation for discussion a bit later, consider now "pathological doubt" not of the metaphysically skeptical kind but that, for instance, of a paranoiac who, in the face of quite conclusive negative evidence, is still suspicious that perhaps his friends, relatives, associates are in some sense "against him," or the doubt of a "pathologically" insecure person who, e.g., fears to cross a street, even given overwhelming evidence that no automobiles are approaching. Such a person is, for personality reasons, unable to appreciate weight of evidence on some matters. But it is not clear that we cannot describe this state of affairs as consisting in a blocked habit and accompanying experience of objects and events as of indeterminate significance with respect to persecution, dangerous automobiles, or whatever. Such a blocked habit will occur in any situation involving a suspected but not completely firmly believed persecution, automobiles, etc. It is not clear, then, that such doubt cannot be described as "evoked by an existential situation." Unless, once more, the word "existential" has some special force. But the indeterminateness may be occasioned by and possessed by seemingly "existential" objects and events, i.e., whatever the paranoiac might point to which, taken in abstraction from the overwhelming evidence to the contrary, could at least raise doubts that there is really no persecution, really no danger of automobiles, etc. And further, unlike the skeptical cases, what is indeterminately signified, hostility or lack of it, etc., is capable of being experienced, is not perhaps self-contradictory in that way. Thus if Dewey meant to condemn such doubts as "pathological" on the ground of their not being "evoked by an existential situation," it is not quite clear how that expression is to be understood.

Thus far the discussion has been incomplete, for no account has been taken of the rest of the expression being discussed, i.e., "*relative to* some existential situation." But it is not quite clear *what* the relations might be which are referred to by "relative to," beyond those of being "evoked by." Perhaps there is simply redundancy for emphasis. If not, what further relations are intended? Perhaps the doubt must be "relative to some existential situation" in the sense of being resolvable by inquiry concerning that situation. This would be simply once more the verifiability criterion of meaning already mentioned. Whether anything else beyond that, and if so what, is intended by "relative to some existential situation" is not clear.

In summary, any doubt, as involving a blocked habit and felt indeterminateness, is evoked by an indeterminate situation. Dewey's account therefore needs clarification. Three types of doubts sometimes considered "pathological" are vague uneasiness without any specified occasioning, skeptical doubts, and (non-skeptical) "pathological" insecurities concerning specific objects. Dewey's condemnation could be meant of the first because they are not evoked by any (differential) situation; and of the second because they are occasioned by an indeterminate signifying which is not "existential" in the sense of empirically testable. But there seems to be no way in which his condemnation could be understood so as to apply at all to the third kind of doubt. In the course of the clarification of meaning one question of truth of assertion arose: if Dewey meant to condemn skeptical doubts on the basis of an empiricist criterion of meaning, evidence would be needed for that criterion.

In conclusion, Dewey's condemnation of "pathological" doubts should be understood only in the first sense; or, if in the second sense, evidence should be provided (if this is possible) for the empiricist meaning-criterion; or some other meaning should be found (supposing this possible) for the expressions of Dewey in question. If none of these things is done, Deweyan theory of inquiry would be improved by simply dropping the condemnatory statement here in question.

II

The first section of this part summarizes Dewey's account of "institution of a problem" and the three remaining sections describe corrections (or, positively put, improvements) in the description.

1

Inquiry itself begins, and a problem as such first exists, when the situation is taken to require inquiry (p. 107). Then the inquirer begins finding out *what* the problem is (p. 108). Specifically, he "searches out the *constituents* of a given situation which, as constituents, are settled"; for "no situation which is *completely* indeterminate can possibly be converted into a problem having definite constituents." For example, when a fire alarm sounds in a crowded auditorium, locations of exits, aisles, and fire are "settled or determinate in existence," and "the first step in institution of a problem is to settle them in *observation*" (pp. 108–109). This determining is guided by the felt indeterminateness of the situation (p. 70). The facts so determined are the facts of the case; they function in "locating and describing the problem" and they must be "taken account of in any relevant solution that is proposed" (pp. 109, 112). Without a problem there is "blind groping in the dark"; the conception of the problem decides which data and possible solutions are considered and which rejected (p. 108).

Any "genuine" problem for inquiry must "grow out of an actual situation," otherwise, "like a so-called arithmetical 'problem' in school work," the setting up of it merely starts one "on a course of dead work," "irrelevant to a genuine issue" (pp. 108, 499). For instance, doing school problems does not develop ability to "understand" because there is not a situation in which things are "directly experienced, . . . undergone, done, enjoyed, or suffered, not just thought of"; there is not "an [indeterminate] situation . . . to induce and direct thought" (*How We Think*, 2nd ed., pp. 99–100). And in social inquiry, any problem that does not "grow out of actual (or practical) social conditions ("actual social situations which are themselves conflicting and confused") is factitious; it is arbitrarily set by the inquirer instead of being objectively produced and controlled"; for the "intellectualization of social conflicts which occasion problems for inquiry can be tested and warranted only by doing something about the problematic existential situation out of which they arise, so as to transform it in the direction of an ordered situation," and data, however carefully gathered, are "capable of being *understood* only in terms of projected consequences of activities" (pp. 498–499).

2

A comparatively small point first. Why are locations of exits, etc., in the auditorium fire example, being already settled "in exist-

ence," contrasted with initial inquiry settling them "in observation," when they are also spoken of as "constituents of a given *situation* which, as constituents, are settled." If certain constituents of a situation are, as such, settled, they are not merely determinate "in existence" but are also determinate as in the environment of the one who has the indeterminate situation; this is by definition of "situation." But it is not clear then what is meant by "settle them in observation," or by "search out" the "settled constituents."

Probably it would be more accurate to say, for the fire alarm example, that in a typical case of a not unusually observant person the situation when the alarm is first sounded includes locations of some aisles and exits rather vaguely, and these have to be made *more* determinate by observation, as well as new facts having to be determined, e.g., location of the fire. And in general, for facts of the case already "[somewhat] settled or determinate in [the environment's] existence" "the first step in institution of a problem is to settle them [further] in observation."

3

That which prevents inquiry from being "blind groping in the dark" is not merely the "problem" in the sense of the "terms of the problem" or "facts of the case." What is also involved in deciding "which suggestions are entertained and which dismissed, and which observed data are accepted and which rejected" is a *question*. For example, it is not just the locations of the fire, aisles, exits, crowds, etc., but the question, "How can we get out safely?" which guides inquiry; and similarly in other cases. As an indication of this, the same observed facts might "locate and describe" different problems for different people; for instance, in the fire illustration, "How can we get out safely?" for an average member of the audience and "How can panic be prevented and all these people gotten out safely?" for a more responsible person. Of course as two inquiries dealing with two such different questions progress, they may diverge considerably in what are facts *of the case* for each. But the facts initially "locating and describing" the different problems may be the same; in such a case the one thing that makes the difference between the different problems is the different questions considered.

Dewey's logical writings sometimes seem fairly explicitly to take account of the distinction between the question and the "problem" in the sense of data (cf. pp. 168–170), but they usually do not; thus the sixth chapter in the *Logic*, which contains the general

account of the phases in inquiry, does not speak at all of "problem" as question. What is spoken of, in Dewey's account, as guiding inquiry is the felt unique quality of indeterminateness. But as unique and so inexpressible (cf. p. 70) this alone hardly guides inquiry. For in a well-conducted inquiry the inquirer can indicate, if asked, what in general he is trying to accomplish by dealing with just the facts and ideas he is dealing with. He can formulate the indeterminateness he is trying to determine. For example, a foundation would not finance a research project if the applicant merely said he felt an inexpressible unique indeterminateness which he wanted to attempt to transform to determinateness. It would ask for a formulated indeterminateness. And this would be a question.

4

It is not clear why, e.g., a "so-called arithmetical 'problem' in school work" is not a genuine problem, does not "grow out of an actual situation," thus may not occasion a genuine inquiry. For the child presented with such a problem has a "need" to solve it, whether for reasons of praise-blame, curiosity, or whatever. And unless the need is met by completely automatically habitual response (in which case there is no inquiry and the case is irrelevant here) there will be felt an initial indeterminateness relevant to that need, i.e., there will be an indeterminate situation. Thus the child's inquiry is occasioned by an indeterminate situation. In that sense, then, an arithmetic problem, e.g., dealt with by a child because of compulsion, is "genuine."

However, as Dewey has pointed out in the case of a problem attacked by a school child *only* because he is forced to do it by reward-punishment, the inquiry will be slow, painful, much more often wrong, simply because he is interested in it *only* as a task. In that sense, as not stimulating very spontaneous inquiry, it is not a "genuine" problem. And the child may learn little if anything of the application of arithmetic, e.g., to actual situations outside of school work, because the only subject-matter he is concerned with in the inquiries as *he* pursues them is "mechanical" relations of abstract symbols, while the teacher thinks he is learning arithmetic as *applicable*. In that sense, in the sense that he is not learning what he is supposed to, the problems engaging him are not "genuine." But it is a bit confusing, unless this distinction of senses of "genuine" is made, to speak simply of uninteresting problems presented to be done by compulsion as not "genuine"; for, as I pointed out above, they are genuine in the sense of involving situations of indeterminate significance relevant

to some need not satisfiable only by merely routinely habitual action. Further, in connection with this linguistic question, it is somewhat confusing for Dewey to say that inquiry concerning compulsory arithmetic problems in school works lacks "a situation . . . to induce and direct thought."

If one were to say this of the compulsory arithmetic problem inquiries, one would seem to have to say it concerning some others which presumably Dewey's theory would wish to describe as evoked by an indeterminate situation. For example, a man might be driving lazily along a lonely country road on a warm summer afternoon and have his car stop, he doesn't know why. Unless he gets the car going again he'll have to sit in the broiling sun or walk several miles in the sun to phone for a tow-truck, neither of which things he at all wants to do. He is compelled, then, to examine the motor to find out why it has stopped, even though he may have absolutely no curiosity, on that occasion or any other, as to what explanation is the answer. Further, he may be sufficiently immature as not to get to work to get the unpleasant inquiry over and done with quickly, but rather to go at it with reluctance, and so carry it on painfully, slowly, clumsily, poorly, and get the motor started again, supposing he does, with only a minimum of understanding of why it started again, when he might have derived much more understanding, useful in the future, if he had attended more to just what he was doing. Yet it would seem a confusing logical usage to call the problem which initiated his inquiry not a "genuine" problem or to say that in such a case there is not "an [indeterminate] situation . . . to induce and direct thought," unless a distinction is made between several senses of "genuine," such as is suggested above, and a corresponding distinction made between several senses of "indeterminate situation."

Consider now Dewey's discussion of social problems "arbitrarily set." For example, a sociological investigation of the correlation between, say, the age of a woman at marriage and the average number of letters in the names of her children does not seem to "grow out of" "practical social conditions" which are "conflicting and confused." But the setting of such a problem occasions a "need," and if habits are blocked in that the problem is not automatically solvable, the need automatically satisfied, there is thereby an indeterminate situation.

As to the testing of the "intellectualization" of such a problem, *as presented* it is already an intellectualization. It may be made more determinate, for instance, with respect to how it may be answered, e.g., what sampling methods to use; but such a de-

termination is tested by solving the latter problem and seeing whether the original problem is thereby helped toward resolution. In such a case, even granting here for the sake of argument that data are "capable of being *understood* only in terms of projected consequences of activities," data in the research can be "understood" in terms of the "projected consequences" which are the knowledge, the determinate signifying of something by data, which is sought by the inquiry.

Dewey's statements about social problems "being set only by actual social conditions which are themselves conflicting and confused" are especially puzzling in view of the fact that elsewhere in the *Logic* he wrote of historical inquiry (and he characterized social inquiry as historical—cf. pp. 501–502) that in such inquiry data may be collected and confirmed as authentic, as a man might gather together bricks, stone, etc., if "he is intending to build a house but before he has a plan for building it . . . in the hope that some of them [the materials gathered], he does not yet know just what, will come in usefully later after he has made his plan; . . . [and these data have] connection with a problem, actual *or potential*" (pp. 232–233, italics mine). It is not clear how or why such gathering and confirming of data cannot be regarded as inquiry, and it is also not clear how such gathering of data "grows out of" any problematic situation other than that set by the desire to get data which *might* be useful in resolving some "problem," i.e., not merely a problem of getting knowledge, which will come up in the future. The broader notion of the connection of social inquiry with a use-enjoyment problem actual *or potential,* would seem to be the less inadequate in view of the considerations already adduced, including Dewey's own statement about gathering historical data.

Summary: (1) Unanswered criticisms of Dewey's concept of indeterminate situation can be answered. Most of them result from not noting that for Dewey a situation's indeterminate components are indeterminate *in significance* and *as experienced.* (2) However, several of Dewey's own statements about situations "inherently doubtful," etc., need clarification. If by any chance they include the meaning that objects and events not experienced can be indeterminate in signifying or that it is not possible for one man to experience as indeterminate what another experiences as determinately signifying, they appear wrong in those respects and the theory will be improved by dropping such meaning. (3) What Dewey means by saying doubts are "pathological" which are not "evoked by and not . . . relative to existential situations"

is unclear. Several possible meanings are suggested; as condemnation of undifferentiated doubts the statement seems acceptable; as criticism of skeptical doubts by an implicit empiricist criterion of meaning it needs evidence for that criterion; and as criticism of (non-skeptical) "pathological" doubts it is inapplicable. If it is to be understood in none of these senses it should be either interpreted in some other way or dropped.

(1) Dewey's account of initially determining constituents of a situation is inconsistent; but it can be easily changed so as to be consistent and apparently accurate. (2) Dewey failed to note that formulation of a problem involves not just determination of facts of the case but also formulation of a question. And, contrary to the Deweyan account, it is this question rather than merely a unique quality of indeterminateness, which guides subsequent inquiry. (3) Every problem, including "problems" set in schoolwork of the traditional sort and the most arbitrarily set social problems, is associated with an indeterminate situation which occasions the inquiry to solve that problem. It is accordingly necessary to note an ambiguity of "genuine" in Dewey's condemnation of such problems as not "genuine."

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GEORGE H. MEAD'S METAPHYSIC OF TIME[1]

IN this paper I should like to consider the meaning and implications of George H. Mead's assertion "that reality exists in a present."[2] This proposition is not only the central thesis of Mead's Carus Lectures, it is, I shall argue, the dominant theme of his final vision of philosophy, especially in relationship to problems of the social realm.

The triple entente in American pragmatism, Peirce, James, and Dewey, have in their deserved renown somewhat obscured the status of the man who is most often counted among their number and placed in their class as a peer, George H. Mead. It is not clear why Mead's work has been neglected in favor of his more famous colleagues and intellectual comrades. Of course, Mead's volumes were not written as books; they were all posthumously published, edited by his students or associates, compiled in most cases from collations of student class notes, stenographic reports

[1] Research for this paper was done during the author's tenure as American Council of Learned Societies Scholar, 1951–53.

[2] George H. Mead, *The Philosophy of the Present*, Chicago, 1932, p. 1.

of lectures, or manuscripts which must, ultimately, be considered fragments of a larger work Mead never completed and probably never would have completed. His genius was not for systematics but for penetrating fragments; his intellect was restless and on the wing. While this sort of mind graced philosophy with its moving image, it left Mead's philosophical insights more or less in the hands of other people, his students or colleagues, who have born the grave responsibility of editorship. While the editors have devoted themselves loyally and intelligently to their task, it is necessary (as I am sure his editors would agree) to return to Mead's own formulations rather than accept as necessarily justified constructions placed upon those formulations. It is my opinion that a serious endeavor to return to Mead, to examine his works critically yet sympathetically, will enable us to see his thought in a profitable light and to determine whether Mead *is* really to be characterized as a "social behaviorist." This, of course, is the tag that has remained on him.[3] To what extent Mead's thought arose and took initial direction in a behavioristic framework and what sort of behaviorism that was are problems to be investigated.

To anticipate my line of argument, I feel that Mead's thought has been somewhat obscured by some of his interpreters,[4] and that this is especially unfortunate, since a close reading of Mead's works reveals a wealth of insights that by far transcend even the broadest conception of behaviorism. In short, I think the time is ripe for a re-evaluation of Mead's thought; certainly his philosophy of time, as the product of his most mature developmental phase, is a suitable threshold to such a proposed study. Since the philosophy of time in Mead is a development from earlier stages of his philosophic growth, the formulation of Mead's problem in regard to time must be made with those earlier stages in mind.

My program, then, is the following: first, to expound and clarify his philosophy of time as revealed in the Carus Lectures, published under the title, *The Philosophy of the Present;* second, to offer a critical analysis, within modest limits, of Mead's philosophy of the present; third and finally, to try to show the fundamental relevance of Mead's thought concerning temporality to basic issues in the methodology of the social sciences and to the larger context of human affairs. That we can look to Mead at the outset for that order of philosophizing worthy of our attention

[3] According to Charles Morris in his Introduction to Mead's *Mind, Self, and Society,* Chicago, 1934, p. xvi, the term "social behaviorism" was not used by Mead; yet cf. *ibid.,* p. 6: "Our behaviorism is a social behaviorism."

[4] As evidenced, for example, in Charles Morris' Introduction to *Mind, Self, and Society.*

is completely certain. We are dealing not with a minor figure or an artificially resurrected intellectual ghost, but rather, in the opinion of such thinkers as Whitehead and Dewey, with "a seminal mind of the very first order." [5]

I

Mead's thesis is "that reality exists in a present." What does he mean by this? Most simply, Mead believes that the content and meaning of past events as well as the imagined, planned for, or projected occurrences-to-be of the future are equally hypothetical, since both are structured, interpreted, and reconstructed in a present. As Mead puts it, "the long and short of it is that the past (or the meaningful structure of the past) is as hypothetical as the future." [6] The present is the locus of reality because all that has been or that will be is reconstructed or structured as real in the present of the individual for whom there is a past and a future. An examination of the dimensions of time, past, future, and present, may further an understanding of this radical conception of temporality.

"The pasts that we are involved in," Mead writes, "are both irrevocable and revocable." [7] *That* a past event has occurred is an irrevocable fact; *what* a past event was and signified, both its content and its meaning, is revocable. The very nature and status of the past event is here being brought into question, for the common-sense assumption that a fact is a fact, that something is what it is, and that when it is past it is still the same thing except for its being past—this fundamental assumption ignores the relatedness of events to the perceivers of events. An event is an event only in so far as it is perceived by an observer for whom it is an event. But all observation is necessarily within a space and time perspective, within the immediate or not-so-immediate interests and concerns of the observer, and so within the complex systems of relevances that pertain in any observational situation. [8] What is it that is the event? If nothing else, Mead warns us against the attitude of naïve realism in regard to answering this question. The content and meaning of the past event are, for Mead, structured and continually re-structured in terms of a present that is itself within a horizon of temporal movement. A re-

[5] John Dewey in his Prefatory Remarks to *The Philosophy of the Present*, p. xl.

[6] *The Philosophy of the Present*, p. 12.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 2.

[8] See Alfred Schuetz, "Common-sense and Scientific Interpretation of Human Action," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, Vol. XIV, No. 1, Sept., 1953, pp. 6, 29–30.

strictive gulf separates the individual from the events of his past; memory is only a partial bridge to the past.

> When one recalls his boyhood days, he cannot get into them as he then was, without their relationship to what he has become; and if he could, that is if he could reproduce the experience as it then took place, he could not use it, for this would involve his not being in the present within which that use must take place. A string of presents conceivably existing as presents would never constitute a past.[9]

It might be protested at this point in Mead's argument that while the "subjective" memories of one's boyhood involve connotations that can never quite be recaptured in their original quality and intensity, in their uniqueness, it is still possible to recapture the past events of the scientist's world, to speak of past events in the realm of physics or chemistry whose connotational and subjective "fringes" are negligible for the purposes of the physicist or chemist in his professional role. Mead faces this criticism squarely. He answers:

> Every generation rewrites its history—and its history is the only history it has of the world. While scientific data maintain a certain uniformity within these histories, so that we can identify them as data, their meaning is dependent upon the structure of the history as each generation writes it. There is no texture of data. Data are abstractions from things and must be given their places in the constructive parts of human communities before they can become events.[10]

The historical past is, then, corrigible to the extent that our knowledge of it is necessarily knowledge within a present, but this does not mean that we are free to reconstruct the past arbitrarily or with abandon. The historian is tied to the weight of recorded data, to the product of past and present scholarship in his discipline, to the requirements of scholarship and the criteria for communicating the fruits of research; all these factors require an approach to the content of the historical past that recognizes the *thatness* of the past, its irrevocable quality. Still, the historian is temporarily defined by his present; the very act of historical research into a past is the effort to bring about the confrontation of a segment of the past with a present. No accumulation of data can alter the internal relationship between past and present that is realized in interpretation as such. "If we had every possible document and every possible monument from the period of Julius Caesar," Mead writes, "we should unquestionably have a truer picture of the man and of what occurred in his life-time, but it would be a

[9] *The Philosophy of the Present*, p. 30.

[10] George H. Mead, "The Nature of the Past," *Essays in Honor of John Dewey*, N. Y., 1929, p. 240.

truth which belongs to this present, and a later present would reconstruct it from the standpoint of its own emergent nature."[11]

If the past, according to Mead, is always being reconstructed in a present, the future is certainly hypothetical and contingent. As Mead puts it, the future is "incurably contingent."[12] If we recall Mead's distinction between the "I" and the "me" aspects of the self, it is not difficult to understand why, for Mead, the future is never completely predictable. The future is projected or imagined by a "me" who carries out his projection in terms of "typical" behavior, but it is always an "I" who performs the actual deed in connection with the "me." The "I" which cannot be pre-figured or perfectly predicted always adds or subtracts something from the typical pattern predicted or expected. The baseball player, to use a Meadian sort of example, who fields a ball hit to him performs his activity in a typical way, in a manner typical of a thousand past performances of the same sort; yet each time he fields the ball his bodily movements, his balance, his intensity, or his effort are to some degree different from any previous performance. Thus, Mead concludes, "that which will happen is always different in some respect from what has happened, and this different quality is something that cannot be predicted. In a sense we can predict the future, but what we can predict is always something less than that which happens."[13] The future anticipated by the "me" is always upset and transcended by the action of the "I." But the "I-me" relationship is a dialectical one in which the deed of the "I" is later absorbed into a "me." Moreover, the "I" aspect of the self can only be observed in reflection, not in immediacy; the "I" can only be seen from the standpoint of the "me." This fact has great importance and carries serious implications for Mead's theory of the self as well as for his philosophy of temporality. We shall return to this point later.

Finally, in regard to the nature of the future, Mead points out that the future has status and significance only in relationship to a present. Just as the past achieves reconstruction only within a present, so the future *is* future only with respect to a present. If we now recall Mead's theory of the status of objects in reality as being in the main objects *at distance* in the perceptual stage of the act, it is easy to see the intimate nexus between future and present in Mead's position. Perceptual experience is experience of objects *to be* manipulated, *to be* handled, *to be* consummated,

[11] *The Philosophy of the Present*, p. 31.
[12] *The Philosophy of the Act*, p. 353.
[13] *Ibid.*, p. 413.

and such manipulation and consummation is anticipated in the perceptual stage of the act. *Futurity, for Mead, is presence at distance.* In any case, it is clear that the temporal dimensions of past and future have their locus in a present apart from which there could be no past and no future. Such is the meaning of Mead's thesis "that reality exists in a present." Having presented the major aspects of Mead's concepts of the past and the future, we must now consider his central theory of the present.

Apart from his discussion of the concept of time in relativity theory, Mead presents two essential and related notions of the present. The first is the "specious" present, the second a present with a "larger" span. While the "specious" present is a theory developed by Mead in reference to his philosophy of the act, the "larger" present relates to his notion of sociality. Let us examine both of these conceptions of the present.

The continuous movement from the first stage of the act, impulse, to the last stage of the act, consummation, is what Mead terms a "passage."[14] Experience of objects in reality is therefore described in terms of a continuum in which the separable aspects of the continuum are merely methodologically static. Experientially, the act refers to the "specious" present of the actor or observer in which there is a "real duration"[15] with limits of past and future at both ends. The duration is in continual and moving relationship to these extremes between which it mediates and in terms of which it builds up, reconstructs the content and meanings of past and future. This present is "specious" precisely because the content involved perpetually looks forward or looks backward, it defines itself in terms of future conduct and in the reactivation of past conduct. "All objects," Mead writes, "are affected with futurity and are in memory with the past. The reality of the object is not present; it is to be or has been."[16] Such a statement in no way contradicts Mead's thesis "that reality exists in a present," for Mead's whole point is that there is a present only in virtue of the impinging past and future, and, conversely, that the past and future have no reality apart from their locus in the present.[17]

The second conception of the present in Mead is that of the "larger" present, the present which is not the immediate field of

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 66.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 221.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 227.

[17] This is Mead's meaning when he writes: "The present of course implies a past and a future, and to these both we deny existence" (*The Philosophy of the Present*, p. 1).

the individual's awareness nor the "specious" spread we have just described, but rather a broader temporal span that includes events that transcend the present of the organism. Included in the "larger" present of the organism are its multiple societal horizons, the full meaning and implications of which come to only fragmentary focus in any individual. The economic, sociological, even the ethical modes of societal organization are structures that transcend the individual; he can know them only in so far as his segment of personal experience permits acquaintance. For Mead, the individual "is a social being in an unanalyzed perceptual world, only a small portion of which is brought within the range of his investigation."[18] Yet Mead insists that the "larger" periods of the present, which clearly transcend the individual, are nevertheless possible only to the extent that the meaning, values, and status of the larger periods are grounded in the individual's present.[19] But common to both the larger present and the specious present is the emergent nature of the present. Emergence and novelty are the blood of the present.

An emergent event appears in a present, though its history is conditioned by what has gone before and its *telos* is realized in the future. Mead writes:

> Given an emergent event, its relations to antecedent processes become conditions or causes. Such a situation is a present. It marks out and in a sense selects what has made its peculiarity possible. It creates with its uniqueness a past and a future. As soon as we view it, it becomes a history and a prophecy.[20]

The emergent is possible because reality contains a multiplicity of possible perspectives, a plurality of differing systems. The organism, being both body and psyche, is at the outset a member of both the spiritual and physical realms. This variety of systems is reflected throughout the range of human activity, from the phenomenon of role-taking to the space-time worlds of relativity theory. Since perspectives have "objective existence,"[21] according to Mead, emergence is not an epiphenomenon to societal reality, but the very character of that reality. The concept of emergence as the dominant character of the present returns us to Mead's root notion of "sociality." Sociality in Mead means both the objective existence of multiple perspectives in which organisms have simultaneous membership and the emergent character of the present, understood as the locus of reality. For Mead, to paraphrase

[18] *The Philosophy of the Act*, p. 21.
[19] *The Philosophy of the Present*, p. 25.
[20] *Ibid.*, p. 23.
[21] *The Philosophy of the Act*, p. 114.

T. S. Eliot, time past and time future are all contained in time present.

II

A serious critique of Mead's philosophy of the present would require an extended treatment as well as a more profound consideration of the meaning of "distance experience," the structure of the act, the subtleties of the theory of the self and the other, etc. We must necessarily limit ourselves to a few general comments. First, I think Mead has presented a theory of the dimensions of time which is original, daring, and rich in its cardinal insights. Starting from a behavioral framework, he has ended with an approach to human behavior in society which replaces stimulus-response mechanisms with a structured act understood from the standpoint of the actor. Transcending the limitations of the act, he has sought to re-approach societal phenomena from the polarity of the social process itself as it is grounded in sociality. These variant efforts reflect a spirit of inquiry that is satisfied with nothing short of total self-honesty and creative humility. Our criticisms of Mead are presented with complete respect for his genius. But respect is not necessarily acquiescence, and if Mead were to reflect upon his own work from a perspective beyond that permitted in his lifetime, I think he would be the first to raise the question, Is it true "that reality exists in a present"? Let us approach this question indirectly by considering some of the themes Mead has developed which stem from this thesis. I should like to consider the historical past, the "I" and "me" aspects of the self, and the notion of "sociality."

Mead claims that the historical past is as hypothetical as the future, that both the content and the meaning of past events are constituted and reconstructed in a present which itself is continually being absorbed into the past. Is it possible in these terms to achieve knowledge of the historical past which is then certain? Can we know the past truly? Mead's answer is that in a limited sense we can gain certain knowledge, in a larger context we cannot. "We can . . . ," Mead writes, "conceive of a past which in any one present would be irrefragable. So far as that present was concerned, it would be a final past."[22] Within the unity of any *one* present, we might achieve undeniable truth concerning the historical past. In the larger context, however, the truth achieved in any one present becomes corrigible in terms of later presents. In examining this argument, I think Mead accomplishes little

[22] *The Philosophy of the Present*, p. 31.

more than indicating what *might* be meant by an assertion that there is "a past independent of the present."[23] Perhaps this is all he intends to assert in this regard, for the argument for a certain past within any one present is really not an argument but the pointing toward an ideal realization of knowledge which is beyond any criterion of validation. In any given present in which there is said to be certain knowledge of the past, it is impossible to ask "Is this really the case or does it only appear to be the case?" We cannot ask this necessary question in any one present because validation requires at least some reference to a later present in which the procedures of validation are exploited. In other words, the concept of certainty itself is either to be understood as an immediate intuitive event in a unit present (something which Mead never intended) or else certainty would have to be understood as involving more than one present. The latter is really Mead's view. He writes:

> Our pasts are always mental in the same manner in which the futures that lie in our imaginations ahead of us are mental. They differ, apart from their successive positions, in that the determining conditions of interpretation and conduct are embodied in the past as that is found in the present, but they are subject to the same test of validity to which our hypothetical futures are subject. And the novelty of every future demands a novel past.[24]

While I do not wish to enter into a discussion of historical relativism at this point, it is possible to say, I think, that what Mead is really suggesting might be termed temporal relationism, rather than relativism. That the events of history can only be grasped within the present of the historian does not mean either that those events are meaningless or that their meaning cannot be determined. Rather, Mead's concept of the present implies that historical understanding cannot ignore or avoid the temporal relata of its objects, and, more important, that the constriction of the limits of certitude are compensated for by a broadening in the comprehension of the basic terms of historical methodology: fact, event, cause, effect, past, future, and present. Mead's temporal relationism consists in the principle that "naïve realism" can no more be taken for granted in historical analysis than it can in philosophical analysis. With this I would agree.

A second theme related to Mead's conception of the present is that of the relationship between the "I" and "me" aspects of the self. Earlier we said that for Mead every "I," i.e., every original and individualistic act of the self, is unpredictable and

[23] *Ibid.*
[24] *Ibid.*

can be grasped only in the completed deed: the "I" is always seen and grasped from the standpoint of a "me." In other words, the "I" comprehended is always an "I" which has been incorporated in a present "me." This concept has important implications for the theory of the self, implications which Mead himself does not develop. If the individual can understand his "I" only as it exists in a "me," he can never see himself in his actual acts as they occur in a present, but only in reflection can he comprehend or grasp the "I" aspect of himself. It is only the *other* who can see us as we are in our acts, in our performances, in our unique "I" aspect.[25] That the act of self-reflection separates the "I" and "me" aspects of the self means that a time factor is the key to that relationship, since the act of self-reflection is one in which a past content is considered in a present. The basic point of criticism here is that Mead's consideration of the "I" and "me" aspects of the self implicitly involves a temporal analysis apart from which the philosophical problem of the nature of the self cannot be handled. In his first work, *Mind, Self, and Society,* Mead dealt with the "I" and "me" within a loose but still behavioral framework; his philosophy of time had not yet been worked out. A true philosophy of the present, however, would have to re-raise the problems of the "I" and the "me" and attempt to account for them within the new framework of emergence, multiple perspectiveness, and sociality.

The term "sociality" leads to our final consideration of themes which cluster about Mead's temporality thesis. We have said before that there are two different though related conceptions of sociality in Mead's thought: the multiplicity of variant perspectives in which the organism has simultaneous membership, and also the idea of *The Present,* the moving stream of social reality. While Mead goes to some length to clarify his notion of sociality in the first sense, i.e., as membership in multiple systems, he does not give us much clarification in respect to the second notion of sociality, that of the present as social reality. The failure to expand his second conception of sociality is highly indicative, I think, of Mead's general approach to the present. He sees the profound problems involved in any philosophy of time which purports to relate to the nature of the self, other selves, and communication between selves, but he offers us only fragmentary analyses of

[25] For this insight I am indebted to Alfred Schuetz, "Scheler's Theory of Intersubjectivity and the General Thesis of the Alter Ego," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,* Vol. II, No. 3, March 1942, p. 343; "On Multiple Realities," *ibid.,* Vol. V, No. 4, June 1945, pp. 538–541.

the issues. In fine, Mead points to the metaphysical ground of temporality, implicitly he realizes the relatedness of the fundamental structures of societal reality to the ground of "sociality," but his researches are outlines for the real job of systematic analysis rather than finished products.

What I have indirectly formulated may now be put in a more forthright manner. I would agree with Mead "that reality exists in a present," but I do not think that he has either proved his case or worked out the far-reaching implications of his thesis. In turn, the failure to support the thesis and fully examine its implications is only partly due to the unsystematic nature of Mead's intellect; the more important reason, I think, is his failure to work out the metaphysical ground of societal reality, his root concept of "sociality." Until that is accomplished, Mead's philosophy of the present operates in a twilight zone between the genius of insight and the poverty of methodological inexactitude. But if Mead has only pointed toward a metaphysical ground of societal reality, rather than explicating that ground, is the title of this paper justified? In one sense, it is a misnomer: Mead has not presented us with a "metaphysic of time"; let us say, instead, that he has given us the prolegomenon to such a metaphysic.

III

Apart from the validity or invalidity of Mead's thesis "that reality exists in a present," I think it is true that the fundamental themes he has dealt with are of urgent relevance to problems of the methodology of the social sciences. The nature of the self, other selves, communication between selves, and so on are at the basis of all sciences that take as the field of their investigation the activities of men and their institutions in social collectivities and relationships. In so far as the problem of time underlies these activities as a basic form, all social sciences which seek to articulate their foundational concepts must face this problem and attempt to resolve the many-faceted tangles it presents. "That reality exists in a present" means, in this context of our discussion, that the events of the social realm are events in a present of an observer who is unique in his space and time relationships to the rest of reality. Each observer, each participant in societal reality, is thus the "O" point of a pair of Cartesian co-ordinates representing the field of his reality. Each of us is at the center of the world as "the" world is the world that is *mine* or *yours*. Since I am the center of reality in this sense, all objects and other persons are *there* in terms of my *here*, and my present means my

now, as my past means my *before* or my *earlier*. That my societal reality is thus rooted in *my* temporal reconstruction in a present is at the heart of all so-called "sociologies of knowledge" as it is the foundation of Mead's temporal "relationism." The nexus between Mead's formulations and essential problems of the foundations of the social sciences is thus an organic and vital bond.[26]

But Mead's recognition of these issues has not prevented him from avoiding many of the foundational problems. Beginning with an unclarified notion of "society" and developing a metaphysically opaque theory of "sociality," Mead does not attempt an analysis of the taken-for-granted reality with which he deals. He writes of the self and the other, of the individual and the group, the self and the we, but he never pauses to ask such questions as, What is a self? What is an I? What is a we? What is a group? It is these questions which must be faced and resolved if the foundational concepts of all social sciences are to be explored systematically and philosophically explicated. That Mead goes as far as he does is a tribute to his philosophical acumen; the scope and complexity of the problems transcend the efforts of any human being, genius or pedestrian.

If Mead's inquiries into the nature of the present have such relevance for the methodology of the social sciences, what importance, if any, attaches to these inquiries in regard to the larger audience interested not in formal problems of the social sciences or of philosophy but in the human condition? What does Mead have to say to the unaverage man who reflects critically upon his experience? After the jangle of jargons has been stilled, what truths emerge? Here I think Mead's analysis of the present continues a tradition that goes from St. Augustine to Bergson: the mystery of time is its living, directional flux which on the one hand leads to necessary distinctions between "knife-edge" presents and "specious" presents, and, on the other hand, leads to the profound experiential gulf between spatialized time and *durée* or inner time-consciousness. To speak of a "mystery" of time is to introduce these distinctions between external time and inner time, between marked time and lived time. What truth there is in Mead's thesis "that reality exists in a present" would certainly lie in the locus of these distinctions and would be characterized by

[26] Cf. Alfred Schuetz, "Phenomenology and the Social Sciences," in *Philosophical Essays in Memory of Edmund Husserl* (edited by Marvin Farber), Cambridge, 1940, p. 180; "Scheler's Theory of Intersubjectivity and the General Thesis of the Alter Ego," *loc. cit.*, p. 346; "Common-Sense and Scientific Interpretation of Human Action," *loc. cit.*, pp. 11–14.

an effort to divine the meaning of "the pattern that is emerging from the roaring loom of time."[27]

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BOOK REVIEWS

A Treatise On Induction and Probability. GEORG HENRIK VON WRIGHT. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co.; London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1951. 310 pp. (International Library of Psychology, Philosophy and Scientific Method.) $5.00.

This book by the young Finnish scholar, for a time Professor of Philosophy at Cambridge University and now back in Finland, will be of interest to most of the readers of this JOURNAL. For most of us have occasion to discuss Mill's methods in our courses in elementary logic, and the main purpose of this book is to make clearer the logical pattern of these methods. The prospective reader must not, however, let himself be dismayed if at first glance he happens on pages containing unusual symbols. The most valuable parts of the book are intelligible without any acquaintance with special symbolism.

In Chapter One, induction, the main topic of the book, is characterized as the "anticipation of facts to come . . . dependent upon information afforded by observation and memory" (p. 13). In particular, the more important type of induction is the anticipation (based on "the information that something has been the case under certain conditions") that "*if* the same conditions are repeated, *then* the same thing will be the case again" (p. 14). Professor von Wright is at pains to remind us that "*conscious* inference by no means always accompanies anticipatory activity" (p. 15). The acceptance of this as a psychological fact marks one of the greatest shifts of fundamental belief of the last fifty years. Consequently what he proposes in the book "is not so much a study of actual intellectual procedures as of certain rationalized counterparts of them" (p. 15). Thus the book is a book on the *logic* of induction, not the psychology of invention and discovery, nor the philosophical problem of the justification of induction. (The author has a brilliant discussion of this last problem in his earlier work, *The Logical Problem of Induction,* Helsinki, 1941.)

[27] *The Philosophy of the Present,* p. 21.

Chapter Two gives some logical terminology apparently devised by von Wright. Chapter Three uses the terminology of Chapter Two to develop a set of theorems about conditions, based on C. D. Broad's article, "The Principles of Demonstrative Induction" (*Mind*, Vol. XXXIX, 1930, pp. 302–317, 426–439). The terms, "Sufficient Condition" and "Necessary Condition," are defined in terms of the logic of properties. All true propositions about Sufficient Conditions and Necessary Conditions can then be translated into provable theorems in the logic of properties. For example, this definition is given: "That (the property denoted by) *A* is a Sufficient Condition of (the property denoted by) *B* means that whenever *A* is present, then *B* is also present" (p. 66). These two chapters become somewhat tiresome and, since only part of the terminology is made use of, the reader will do well to skip them and to use the index to locate the definitions of terms that puzzle him in later chapters. One wonders what purpose is served by a logic of properties. The reviewer can suggest two purposes: first, to show that this whole manner of speaking, found in many discussions of causation and induction, is reducible to statements about the presence or absence of properties, and does not therefore require the postulation of any separate intellectual intuition; second, to explore the claims that have been made in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions for Mill's Methods and such postulates as the late Lord Keynes' Postulate of Limited Variety.

It appears to be von Wright's strategy to shift from an unanalyzed use of the words "cause" and "effect," which we find in Mill, to the use of the words "Necessary Condition" and "Sufficient Condition." These terms are not indefinable but are rather definable in terms of the logic of properties. It may be that "the notion of condition could be used for . . . a partial analysis of the notion of cause and effect" (p. 75). This "suggested partial analysis" might then be made total by "the introduction of certain qualifications as regards relatedness in time" (p. 75). In this the reader will recognize that von Wright is following Hume's pattern of analysis of "what philosophers, scientists, and ordinary people have had in mind when talking vaguely of phenomena being causally determined" (p. 75).

Eliminative Induction is discussed in Chapter Four. This follows the treatment of his earlier work. The most important point is the exhibition that the use of Eliminative Induction "does permit demonstrative conclusions as to the truth-values of laws" (p. 85). This point has not been made in the usual discussions of the methods of Agreement and Difference, and von Wright's remarks are very

helpful in showing how these methods may be accounted for. Yet "it is clear that these conclusions (of Eliminative Induction) are always in the negative, i.e., relate to the falsehood of laws" (p. 85). (If it were not for the restrictions put on the form of the laws to be discussed which limit them to single-place predicates and exclude relational predicates, it would do even less than this.) We should like to know whether there is any logic in a choice of one of the considerable number of laws that have *not* been falsified. Von Wright points out that the usual belief is that upon supplying certain premises we can deduce *which* one of the laws is the true one. This is not to claim that in actual inference we consciously appeal to such principles, for von Wright, as we have already remarked, has freed himself from "the deep-rooted prejudice that sound reasoning must always be syllogistic or deductive" (p. 130). Nevertheless he takes it to be "an important task of the Logic of Induction to make clear the nature of the supplementary premises" (p. 129), that is to say, those premises whose addition makes possible the deduction of the laws which have been accepted.

A detailed reconstruction of Mill's Methods occupies Chapter Five. Von Wright takes up Mill's attempt to form an inductive logic that would show how to prove generalizations on the evidence of particular instances. He states complex propositions, corresponding to the *principles* of induction stated by Mill, Keynes, and Broad. Von Wright preserves rather carefully the distinction between a *rule* of inference and a general *proposition*. A rule, the reader may be reminded, states that given propositions of a specified form, a proposition of specified form is to be inferred. For example, given A, and given, if A then B, infer B. In contrast there is in the logic of propositions a corresponding logically true statement: If A, and if A then B, then B. In Hilbert-Ackermann's classical formulation only two rules of inference are needed. They add, however, for convenience of inference further rules, which are *justified* because they correspond to formulas proved logically true. Discussions of inductive logic have frequently created an inductive logic by adding rules of inference which have no corresponding logically true formulas. For example, Bertrand Russell argues that "scientific inferences, if they are in general valid, must be so in virtue of some law or laws of nature, stating a synthetic property of the actual world" (*Human Knowledge*, p. 418).

Von Wright's treatment of Mill's Methods is to try to state them within the framework of modern deductive logic. The additional resources of modern logic make it possible to analyze the deductive relations of propositions far more clearly than Mill was able to.

There is no need then for an inductive logic as distinct from deductive logic. There need be merely different uses of deductive relationships. We have already reported von Wright's statement that the Eliminative methods simply eliminate some candidates for true generalizations. He further shows that without restricting the form of the generalization in some way the data of particular cases will never suffice to inform us which of the remaining is the true generalization. Von Wright suggests that the place Mill assigns to the Law of Universal Causation (see J. S. Mill, *A System of Logic*, Book III, Chapter XXI) can be accounted for by treating it as a general statement which will have such a deductive consequence.

It is von Wright's discovery that the failure of previous discussions of such additional postulates rests on two mistakes. First, writers have tended to "regard the supplementary principles as relatively modest principles" (p. 131). Secondly, they have tended to "assume the exact content of the supplementary principles as the same, if not for all, at least for large groups of inductive inferences" (p. 131). This has been concealed since "the traditional Logic of Induction has . . . been limited to a treatment of what is here called the Simple Case" (p. 92), that is, a case where the possible laws have linked one property to another, as for example, *All ravens are black*. Laws more complex than these are discovered in science and von Wright tries to "provide an adequate logical instrument for reconstructing" the Complex Case. He refers to "Gestalt-Psychology and the introduction of laws of a new type, called *Gestalt*-laws, which are sometimes claimed to be radically different from the laws of classical physics and traditional associational psychology" (p. 92).

His reconstruction offers two postulates. "The first . . . states the existence of actual conditioning properties of a certain conditioned property" (p. 130). This formulates what has been called the Principle of Determinism or the Law of Universal Causation. The weakest effective form of the Deterministic Postulate amounts to claiming "for every property of a certain universe there is a set of initially possible conditioning properties, which contains at least one Necessary Condition, at least one Sufficient Condition, and at least one Necessary and Sufficient Condition of the property" (p. 132).

The second postulate is "concerned with the selection of the initially possible conditioning properties. . . . It states two things: first, that the range of initially possible conditioning properties includes the actual conditioning properties, and secondly, that the

state of analogy among any given number of things in respect of the initially possible conditioning properties, can be settled on the basis of an enumeration of the data of elimination" (p. 130).

Some such premises will serve to specify what will be the logical structure of the Necessary and Sufficient Conditions that will be accepted. In other words, in the past it has been thought that the laws must be of a certain specifiable logical form. It is von Wright's contention that these two postulates are falsifiable propositions. This enables him to "show the attempt to prove the presuppositions or supplementary premises of induction independently of, or prior to, the several inductive conclusions which they are to support, is an idle undertaking" (p. 139).

An excellent discussion of an example of the formation of concepts appears in Chapter Six, showing how induction of laws is followed by the modification of the definition of the terms in the law. It is followed by an equally clear-headed discussion of the rectification of laws through the specification of the *Ceteris-Paribus* clause.

Von Wright's treatment in Chapter Seven of probability concentrates like his earlier writings on the elaboration of an interpretation of an axiomatic system. He takes as the undefined term the relational predicate, $P\ (A, H, p)$, where p is a numerical variable, A and H are variables for sentences, A predicating that "a certain thing has a certain property" and H predicating that "the *same* thing has a certain other property" (p. 172). The six axioms are von Wright's own. (For an earlier version see his "Ueber Wahrscheinlichkeit," *Acta Societatis Scientiarum Fennicae*, Nova Series, A, III, 11, 1945). This chapter concludes with an all too brief discussion of "interpretation of the calculus in terms of frequency, possibility, and partial belief" (p. 220). He does not concern himself further with "how we come to know the truth-value of probability-propositions" (p. 222).

He takes up in Chapter Nine the controversial topic of whether any intelligible interpretation can be given to the attribution of a degree of probability to a law of nature.

The author's conclusion is that "to speak of the increasing probability of a law turns out to be only a disguised manner of expressing facts about the elimination of 'concurrent' possibilities" (p. 253). Thus it amounts to saying that "as the number of possible alternative laws decreases through elimination, the proportion of true laws decreases" (p. 254). Von Wright admits that this reconstruction has made inductive probability "utterly trivial and void of practical interest" (p. 254), but asks: "Was it ever reason-

able to expect that the Argument from Confirmation and other uses of Inductive Probability, once they had become properly clarified, would amount to anything very important from the point of view of scientific practice? . . . The reconstructive examination has served its purpose if it has succeeded in making clearer what people actually do when they employ arguments" (p. 254). He claims the same results from his treatment of the Argument from the Simplicity of Laws and from Analogy as applied to the existence of other minds.

This prepares for the treatment in Chapter Ten of what is here called Apparent Inductive Probability, probability attributed to predictions of individual events, but "which is for some reason mistakenly believed to be an attribute of theories or laws" (p. 275). The three prominent cases are the Probability of Causes, the Induction of Statistical Laws from Samples, and the Probability of Future Events. Von Wright gives a sober statement of why scientists are right in regarding these as unsound. This takes the form of working out various assumptions that would suffice for the inference and then showing how unplausible they are.

The value of this book is that it shows the result of taking seriously Mill's claim that "the rules of Induction are concerned with the conditions of Proof" (*op. cit.*, Book III, Chapter XIV, footnote in Section 5). Taking "proof" in the sense of "deduction from known premises," modern work in deductive theory makes it possible, first, to show that the general principles Mill offered come close to making induction deductively valid, and that the various revisions of his principles come closer. Secondly, it makes it possible to show unforeseen difficulties in even *stating* principles from which the laws in fact accepted could be deduced, not to speak of stating principles which we know to be true. Consequently, any one who follows the details of von Wright's exposition will be convinced that there is no special inductive *logic* independent of deductive logic. When this point is agreed to and the common deductive techniques employed to reconstruct the inductive premises, it becomes plain that there are many forms of premises that might be offered, once we have given up the hope of *knowing* these particular ones to be true. It is unfortunate that von Wright does not discuss the considerations that led Aristotle and his successors to the belief in the existence of causes, the uniformity of nature, the argument from analogy, and the simplicity of law. Such an understanding would make Mill's Methods even less plausible as a method of proof. (This point the reviewer owes to his colleague Professor J. R. Weinberg, who is preparing a manuscript on Aristotelian theories of induction.)

In conclusion, we wish again to commend this book to all who are interested in induction. It is true that the book is mainly destructive in the results of its clarification, as indeed the author warns the reader in his Introduction. This destruction is, however, no trivial matter, for most of what is written about Mill's Methods and the use of the theory of probability to make inductions would collapse in the light of a careful study of this book. It is only by clearing away the mistakes of the past that we may go on to more constructive tasks. We hope that the author will soon fulfill his promise to write another book "to illuminate by reconstruction the actual procedures of science" (p. 12).

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The Quest For Community; a Study in the Ethics of Order and Freedom. ROBERT A. NISBET. New York: Oxford University Press, 1953. ix, 303 pp. $5.00.

Even a perfunctory acquaintance with recent social and political science will reveal that the basic theoretical concepts have been gradually undergoing revision. Theories of society or the state based upon the "psychic," biological, or instinctive properties of the individual are generally discredited. A new perspective is emerging in which the "social unit" is replacing the "autonomous individual" as the focal point of study.

This work, written by a sociologist, staunchly defends this institutional viewpoint. The author devotes considerable space to a devastating criticism of "individualism" in all avenues of contemporary life: art, literature, religion, social sciences, and political theory and practice. While many of Professor Nisbet's criticisms are well known today (and are likely to find wide support), the implications (especially to political practice) of institutionalism as an alternative view have not always been clearly drawn. Drawing these implications is the chief virtue, and substantial contribution, of Mr. Nisbet's efforts. For he attempts to determine what is entailed in political theory and practice by the institutional theory of the nature of man; and his findings are both revealing and disturbing to "orthodox liberalism." If his conclusions are correct, then a drastic revision of one type of political liberalism is in order.

Mr. Nisbet maintains that the primary institutional relationships of men, the family, local community, church, etc. are essential to human life. From these institutions the principal incentives of

life (psychological, symbolic) are engendered; from them men acquire a sense of the meaning of the outer world and of their status within it. Each man requires identification with a community. This "quest for community" Nisbet believes to be a "recurrent" theme of human history, springing ". . . from some of the powerful needs of human nature" (p. 73). Western man's failure to find the community, Nisbet believes, has become the dominant intellectual fact of the present age. Instead of clear moral purpose, one finds "insecurity," "anxiety," "alienation," and "frustration" as pervasive symptoms.

Why has this moral and social disruption occurred? Mr. Nisbet argues that it is due to the fact that "the primary social relationships have lost much of their historical function of mediation between man and the larger ends of our civilization" (p. 52). And he maintains that these profound dislocations have been brought about largely by the growth of the Western political state. Unfortunately, Mr. Nisbet does not always provide sufficient evidence for his sweeping generalization that the state is the chief culprit. It is undoubtedly true that the state is an important cause of social disorganization. But if economic determinism is wrong, so is any suggestion of political determinism. Mr. Nisbet weakens his argument by minimizing other factors, although he does recognize them—industrialization, capitalism, education, and science, etc.—in the shattering of traditional moral loyalties.

Mr. Nisbet believes that the growth in function and authority of the state has been a continuous process. That this should be defended in political theory he finds distressing, particularly since the justification of state intervention is based on a false theory of man and society. Yet support for a larger state is found throughout political philosophy: in the sovereign state of Bodin and Hobbes, in the apotheosis of the General Will by Rousseau, in Bentham's Utilitarian reform movement, and in Marxism and Socialism. Nisbet does not doubt that many totalitarian theorists justify the state as an end in itself; however, he holds that "liberalism" is responsible to a considerable extent for the increasing power of the state.

Historically, "liberalism" (he uses the term as generally synonymous with "reform") has, for the most part, looked upon the *status quo* as oppressive. Liberals thought that only by ridding conventional society of its injustices could the individual be emancipated. According to Nisbet, this led to a demand that the traditional associations in competition with the greater public welfare be eliminated; the state is defended as the chief instrument

of reform. The result of this, we are told, is that the state is gradually usurping the other "necessary avenues of expression," atomizing traditional institutions into a rootless mass, and paving the way for the development of totalitarian society. "Laissez-faire" individualists have frequently raised the spectre of an authoritarian state crushing the liberty of the individual. "It is the liberal concentration of interest upon the individual, rather than upon the association in which the individual exists, that serves, paradoxically as it may seem, to intensify the processes that lead straight to governmental power" (p. 256). Nisbet believes that the "discrete" individual is a fiction. Accordingly, the issue must be put in its proper perspective: the conflict today is an institutional one between the traditional associations of society and the state. But this, says Nisbet, poses a dilemma for liberalism. One can not deny the humanitarian effects of liberal reform in liberating man from blind tradition and providing the conditions for the good life. However, to the extent that the nature of man requires "fulfillment" in terms of clear identification with intermediate social institutions, then liberalism must cease to restrict these institutions and must endow them with real authority to carry out their functions. Since the state is only *one* institution among many, its power must be curtailed. Only in this way, he believes, can the nationalization of culture, taste, mind, and other evils be avoided.

Thus there are two courses for liberalism: a monistic or a pluralistic society. Nisbet's preference is for a pluralistic democracy whose ". . . major objective becomes that of making harmonious and effective the varied group allegiances which exist in society, not sterilizing them in the interest of a monistic political community" (p. 250). For him the deeper question of freedom does not simply concern the freedom of individuals, but the survival of the smaller associations in which individuals exist and function. Social freedom "thrives on diversification (and decentralization) of power" (p. 256). The aim, then, must be to "create conditions within which *autonomous groups* may prosper" (p. 278, italics added). Consequently, it is necessary to "reintegrate" traditional institution in liberal theory and practice and to develop a new theory of administration consistent with such a doctrine of *"laissez-faire" institutionalism.*

This suggests, in a sense, that we look once again with favor upon social values once essential to the Middle Ages: "clear status," "function," and "hierarchy"; it calls for a reappraisal of Burke and other eighteenth-century conservatives who opposed the destructive aspects of the French Revolution. All of this may cause

many liberals to groan, particularly those who accept a form of institutionalism, yet who do not see the pragmatic consequences (which may be uncomfortably "conservative") implicit in this position. Recently, political pluralism has had many supporters. What Mr. Nisbet is advocating has been suggested in many ways by Cole, the early Laski, Frank Tannenbaum, and E. Jordan, among others. But not everyone has seen, as has Mr. Nisbet, the effects of the theory of institutional pluralism for a concrete program of practice. Nisbet maintains that the history of political theory indicates the need for changing labels and programs in the light of new knowledge and conditions. We *may* now be at a vital juncture where the ideals of liberalism can best be achieved through separate institutions and not the omnicompetent state. If so, there is little to be gained in quibbling about labels.

But Mr. Nisbet's provocative theory leaves many important practical and theoretical questions unanswered. If (for social "health") we grant the necessity of preserving a wide diversity of institutions (and Mr. Nisbet has marshaled considerable evidence from the social sciences in support of this contention), then how are we to deal in a practical way with "unjust" institutions? Some institutions (economic, religious, etc.) frequently are more oppressive and corrupt than the state. Such institutions grow so large that only big government seems capable of coping with them. Nisbet holds that maintenance of the "moral community" is fundamental, but is it *always* so? Is it, for instance, in *every* context more important than satisfying demands for economic or social equality? Perhaps the satisfaction of basic human needs (which may involve considerable disruption of traditional social structures and attitudes) is a necessary condition for any real moral community. One can not simply dismiss the liberal demand or deplore its consequences. After all, "liberalism" (assuming that this term has a general meaning, however vague) arose in response to pressing problems. *If* the liberal program has failed, then a clear alternative solution to the problems must be presented. This Nisbet does not positively do.

Underlying these considerations is a basic theoretical issue, not met head on by Nisbet, yet needing further discussion. This concerns the "nature" of institutions: are institutions "natural" (real) or "artificial" (conventional); and how far may they be changed? Perhaps, as many today argue, the "ontological" part of this problem is a false or verbal issue, and the "normative" aspect simply a matter of "persuasive definition." I will not pretend to reply to these objections here. Further analysis of

these questions might be useful, since various political theories make ontological and normative assumptions, implicitly or explicitly, and since most men argue *as if* their political beliefs were objectively grounded, or dependent in some way upon a descriptive referent.

Are institutions "natural" and necessary to human life? If they are, then it may follow that one tampers with them only at great risk. (Nisbet apparently favors this view, although he in no sense hypostatizes institutions.) But there are serious difficulties in this conception. "Natural" institutions have necessary functions, hence are to be preserved. But how is one to determine what is natural or necessary? The state (or other "unjust" institutions) must also be natural. Since it is developing in the way that it has, why not condone its continued growth? Is the final test one of "normalcy" and "integration"? Or, on the contrary, are institutions only "artificial" or contractual? If they are, then one may have considerable latitude for reconstructing them and justifying almost any course of action by the state.

What, for instance, is the role of scientific or educative institutions? Or, more importantly, what is the relationship of existing institutions to an international order? Traditional society has its institutions, but a changing social scene seems to create new associations. The basic question then remains: *which* institutions are necessary and why? This is a political problem concerning the distributions of power and function; but it rests in part upon a theory of social institutions. Such a detailed theory, as we have said, is not presented by Mr. Nisbet. But since this presupposes a considerable fund of empirical knowledge about social behavior which to date remains underdeveloped, it is perhaps unfair to press the issue.

The very fact that this work is able to suggest with great force and clarity many of the underlying problems we face, is enough to commend it for serious consideration by all those troubled by the current indecisive state of social and political theory.

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NOTES AND NEWS

THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL ASSOCIATION

EASTERN DIVISION

FIFTIETH ANNUAL MEETING

UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER, DECEMBER 28–30, 1953

MONDAY, DECEMBER 28

4:00 P.M. The Paul Carus Lectures. General title: *Reason and Reality: An Examination of the Philosophic Enterprise.* By J. Loewenberg. Lecture I: "Anomalies of Doubt."

5:00 P.M. Business Meeting.

8:00 P.M. Smoker.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 29

9:15 A.M. History of Philosophy.

Gail Kennedy: "Science and the Transformation of Common Sense: The Basic Problem of Dewey's Philosophy."

Alice Ambrose: "Wittgenstein on Some Problems in Foundations of Mathematics."

Donald C. Williams: "Of Essence and Existence and Santayana."

1:30 P.M.

"Ethical Reasoning" (symposium). Abraham Edel and Douglas P. Dryer. Comments by Philip Blair Rice and John Ladd.

"On the Ontological Significance of the Löwenheim-Skolem Theorem" (joint symposium with the Association for Symbolic Logic). George D. W. Berry and John R. Myhill. Comments by Hao Wang and Robert McNaughton.

4:00 P.M. Carus Lecture II: "Faith in Reason." J. Loewenberg.

5:00 P.M. Cocktails.

7:00 P.M. Banquet.

Presidential Address by Glenn R. Morrow: "The Demiurge in Politics: The Timaeus and the Laws."

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 30

9:15 A.M.

"Are Religious Dogmas Cognitive and Meaningful?" (symposium). Raphael Demos and C. J. Ducasse. Comments by V. C. Aldrich.

"Justification in Science" (symposium). Frederic B. Fitch and Arthur W. Burks. Comments by William Craig and Frederick L. Will.

11:30 A.M. Special Business Meeting.

1:30 P.M.

"The Ethics of Academic Freedom" (symposium). George Boas and Sidney Hook.

4:00 P.M. Carus Lecture III: "Primacy and Priority." J. Loewenberg.

GROUP MEETINGS

MONDAY, DECEMBER 28

10:15 A.M. The Peirce Society.

José M. Ferrater Mora: "Peirce's Conception of Architectonic and Related Views."

Irwin Lieb: "Signs of Possibility in Peirce's Philosophy."

Nelson Goodman: "Comments Introducing a Discussion of Peirce's Semiotic and Methodology."

1:30 P.M. The Pre-Socratic Society.

Constantine Cavarnos: "Some Important but Neglected Aspects of Pre-Socratic Philosophy."

7:30 P.M. The Personalistic Discussion Group.

D. Luther Evans: "The Ego-centric Prerogative—A Plea for Idealistics."

7:30 P.M. Discussion Group on Creative Ethics.

Robert S. Hartman: "The Creation of Scientific Ethics."

7:30 P.M. Association for Realistic Philosophy.